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ABSTRACT

This quarterly journal offers information about diverse aspects of education in countries throughout the world. Following an editorial discussion of education for citizenship, articles included are: "Free Education for All" (E. Jouen); "The Challenge of Pay Equity: A Stubborn Problem" (M. Tomei); "The IMF's Pupil in Latin America: Chronicle of a Dismal Failure" (M. Maffei); "What GATS Means to Higher Education" (M. Fouilhoux); and "Norway Wishing Utdanningsforbundet a Long Life" (J. Garbo). This issue also includes the Dossier, "Learning To Live Together"A which contains nine articles: (1) "Introduction" (S. Hanley); (2) "The Right to Education" (K. Tomasevski); (3) "Common Kinds of Discrimination in Education" (A. Amor); (4) "South Africa Struggles for Equality in Education" (H. Lorgat); (5) "The Role of Textbooks in the Promotion of International Brotherhood" (S. Fujikawa); (6) "The Commitment of Governments to Multicultural Education"; (7) "Gender in Pursuit of a Culture of Peace" (B. A. Reardon); (8) "Education for All for Learning To Live Together: Problems and Solutions" (C. Braslavsky); and (9) "Legislation." Additional articles are: "Education in the Hands of Sheriffs" (A. Car); "Education in Time of War" (H. Ferlini); "Education Plays a Leading Role in Rebuilding War-Torn Country" (A. Mathews); "Industrialized Countries Give Lip Service to Development Commitments" (W. Van der Schaaf); and "International Bureau of Education: Forward-Looking Institution with Deep Roots in the Past" (C. Braslavsky). (BT)

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Fred van Leeuwen, Editor

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March 2002

8 March

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Argentina

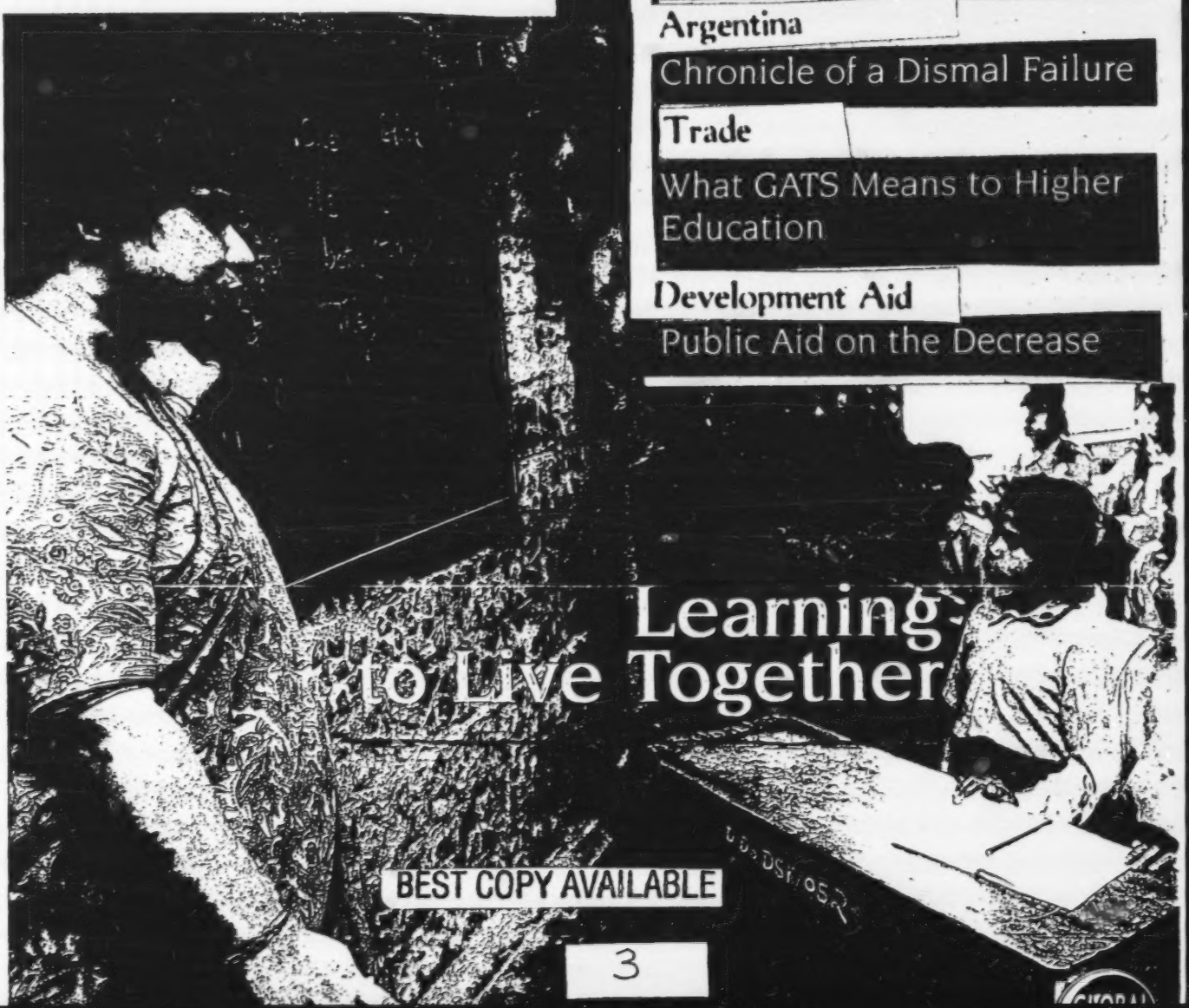
Chronicle of a Dismal Failure

Trade

What GATS Means to Higher Education

Development Aid

Public Aid on the Decrease



Learning to Live Together

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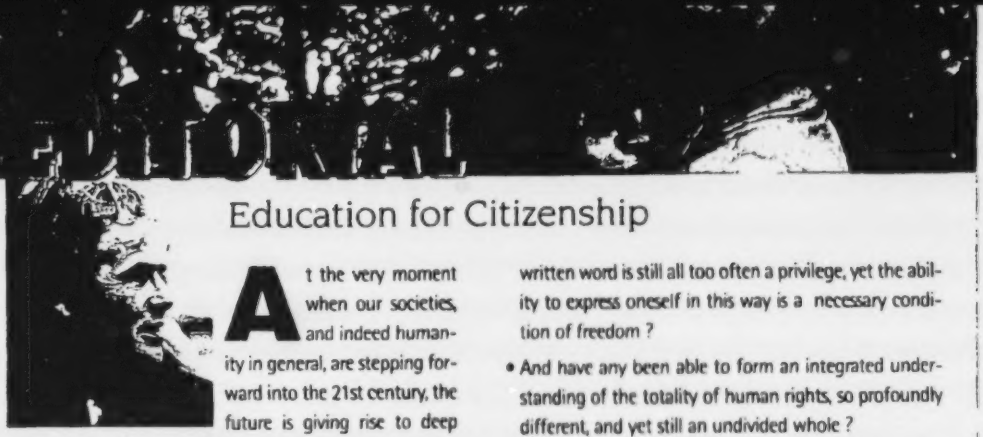

Education for Citizenship

At the very moment when our societies, and indeed humanity in general, are stepping forward into the 21st century, the future is giving rise to deep debate. On the one hand the progress of knowledge, particularly in science and technology, provides some ground for hope for the future of humankind. On the other hand, September 11 still dominates our thoughts and reminds us that our modern world is dangerously exposed to all kinds of perils, conflicts and unforeseen disasters.

We want to see a world in which peace, democracy, freedom, social justice, fairness, tolerance, human rights and social inclusion reign supreme. And we also want the men and women of the third millennium trained to grasp the nature of the society in which they live and can participate with ease because they have the capacity to make decisions and choices based on a thorough understanding of every situation. In a nutshell, we want every individual to be the master of his or her fate, as performer, creator and producer; to be able to make a full contribution to the development of all aspects of society, whether economic, political, social or cultural.

Our aim is for every human being to be able to fulfil what the International Commission of Education for the 21st Century calls "active citizenship", responsible citizenship. But how is this citizenship to be built, and at what level ? We would like to pause for a moment to ask the following questions :

- How many students, having completed a geography course, have gained a precise understanding of the geography of hunger or the way in which fresh drinking water is shared ?
- How many of those students, at the end of a course in contemporary history, are able to grasp the contradictory logic which arises from the decolonisation process - a logic which partly governs the modern world ?
- Are there any who have learned from literature, through clear examples, that the right to express oneself in the written word is still all too often a privilege, yet the ability to express oneself in this way is a necessary condition of freedom ?
- And have any been able to form an integrated understanding of the totality of human rights, so profoundly different, and yet still an undivided whole ?

Education for citizenship should have as a major objective the aim of providing students with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to play a constructive part within society. It should support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth, so that they become more confident and responsible both in and out of school.

Students should be encouraged to take a significant part in the life of their school, their neighbourhood, their community and in a wider sense the world in general. Education for citizenship should give equal support to the learning of universal values as a basis of understanding, to the respect for cultural, ethnic and religious differences, and to the development of the ability to think, to criticise and to take a stand.

Education along these lines cannot be delivered by the school system alone, but there is no doubt that it is during the first years at school that the basis for citizenship training should be laid down. This time is crucial in the building of children's personalities, their ability to understand their world and learning skills they will need throughout the whole of their lives. It is also when education reaches the greatest number of young people that teachers and the democratic school providing its equality of opportunity have a fundamental role to play in creating active citizens.

One of the most clearly visible challenges facing us in the 21st century is that of teaching our children how to be active, responsible citizens.

Fred van Leeuwen
General Secretary

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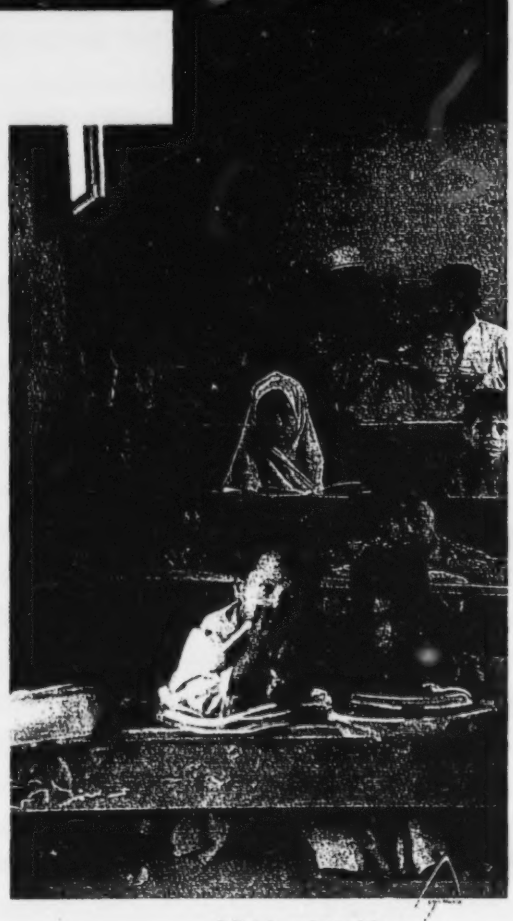
Free Education For All



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In the campaign to mobilise public opinion on the importance of access to free education for all, EI is undertaking in concert with the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a Global Action Week on April 22 to 28.

Education For All: a way to combat poverty

All of the research carried out by international organisations clearly shows that general access to basic education is critical to the reduction of poverty. The action plan adopted by the World Education Forum in Dakar (April 2000) aimed at achieving Education For All (EFA) between now and 2015 took this position with the condition that all the governments concerned would submit national action plans. The process of working out national plans is at present being carried out, with the participation of civil society organisations. However the level of participation by civil society is solely guided by national education authorities.

Access to education for all guarantees the ability to escape from poverty. Education International is convinced of the truth of this, and for this reason is supporting the efforts of the various partners to achieve the aims set out in Dakar. The EFA process has gained our support because it rests on principles and values we espouse.

Grey areas still exist: the transfer of responsibility for education to the private sector, the quality of the education which will be delivered, the level of training of the personnel involved, and whether access to basic education will be free or not are matters that have raised questions and doubts regarding the effective implementation of EFA in all countries.

Is there a price tag on the escape from poverty?

There is a strong demand for education from families everywhere in the world. However some people, particularly in the rural areas of poor countries, question the usefulness of a formal education based on traditional programmes that often have little to do with the everyday lives of people who are largely concerned with agriculture, stock-rearing and fishing.

These people must be helped to understand that education is a way in which they can improve their standard of living and ensure a decent quality of life. They cannot be forced to demand access to basic education. This would be pointless. It can only be achieved by raising the awareness of the individual and collective advantages that are obtained by the community as a whole. In this respect, the organisations, which are integral to civil society, have a dynamic role to play in the process.

But universal education also raises problems from the point of view of the provider. What should be the content of the education on offer? What should the conditions of access be: free, partially free or paid?

The nature of education offered - the content and cost - determines to a large extent the level of demand. Setting up education for all is aimed mainly at the most marginalised families. It would be inconceivable that such families should be obliged to pay for access to education for their children. To be obliged to pay for the privilege of escaping poverty would be a political absurdity and economically and socially impossible.

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE), in which EI is a partner, will be highlighting all these questions during the 3rd Global Action Week. The GCE hopes to sound the alarm and raise the awareness of political decision-makers to the fact that the provision of Education For All by 2015 can only be achieved if clear and concrete undertakings are made to end fees and charges for education.

This is by no means the case at the moment, including in the so-called public education system. Sometimes families are obliged to buy textbooks, sometimes they must pay teaching fees, and often they have to buy uniforms from businesses which have a monopoly on manufacturing and distribution - and frequently that business is in the hands of high-level government representatives. Anyone who does not speak out against these practices, tacitly accepts them. And those who are involved in this way are profiting by the poverty of the poorest families.

EI will spotlight all these questions over the coming months by publicising contemptible practices like these, which are in the final analysis additional hurdles to access to education for all. ◆

Elie Jouen
Deputy General Secretary

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The Challenge of Pay Equity: a Stubborn Problem

Addressing pay inequity between men and women is crucial to achieving genuine gender equality at work.

The wage differential between men and women constitute one of the most persistent forms of gender inequality in the labour market. Overall, women earn less than men irrespective of a country's level of socio-economic development, political system or religious and cultural context. Pay differentials do, however, vary across occupational groups and countries[1]. The OECD data available for public services in the 30 most industrialized countries shows that the gender pay gap declined slightly between 1985 and 1995[2], with the widest pay gap in Korea and Japan, and the smallest wage differential in France, Belgium and Denmark.

There does not appear to be a linear or uniform trend in gender pay imbalances – narrowing in some countries while increasing in others. What is striking and worrisome is that in recent years the pay gap between men and women has widened or stagnated in countries, such as Sweden or Denmark, that for many years had experienced a consistent narrowing of the pay gap.

Both within and between countries, labour market polarisation and growing income inequalities associated with globalisation have contributed to a widening of the pay gap. In developing countries, the downsizing and restructuring of the public sector, which has traditionally been the main source of good jobs for women (e.g. stable and protected) have also played a role in the widening of pay inequities. In fact, retrenched women workers are more likely than men to exit the formal labour market and engage in informal work.

It must be noted that a reduction in the pay gap is not necessarily an indication of overall social progress. A decline may be the result of absolute drops in men's earnings rather than a rise in women's wages[3]. This points to a need for the broadening of our analysis not only to include the evolution of average male and female earnings in a given sector or across sectors, but also the changes in average male wages over time.

Several factors are believed to be responsible for the wage differential between men and women. These include: women's concentration at the lower end of a segregated labour market, their engagement in much fewer occupations than men and their holding positions of little, if any, authority. But even in jobs where women are predominant, such as teaching and nursing, they tend to be concentrated in lower hierarchical positions.

It is widely believed that women's lower educational endowments, the undervaluing of their skills as well as intermittent career paths are the main reasons for gender pay differentials. However, in many countries, there is a narrowing of the gender gap in primary and secondary schools and increasingly women's enrolment in higher education equals or surpasses that of men (UN, 2000). Despite this, women are holding lower-paying jobs than men with equivalent education and work experience. Women often need to attain higher levels of education in order to receive the same pay of men with lower qualifications.

The male-female wage gap can also be traced to differences in the type of jobs that women tend to choose or are compelled to accept in order to combine child rearing or caring for dependents with income-earning opportunities. This results from a combination of unequal divisions in family responsibilities, inadequate and costly child-care facilities or work places with inflexible work hours.

The pay gap is also affected by prevailing national wage systems and the strength of the labour movement. In countries where wages are fixed through collective bargaining, the degree of decentralization is known to make a significant difference. It is interesting to note that collective bargaining systems that are centralized

1 UN, The World's Women 2000, Trends and Statistics, Social Statistics and Indicators, series K, No. 16, New York, United Nations, 2000.
2 OECD, Employment Outlook, 2001, OECD, Paris.
3 I. Breugel, "Globalization, Feminization and Pay Inequalities" in J. Gregory et al., Women, work and inequality: the challenge of equal pay in a deregulated market, London: Mac Millan, New York: St Martin's Press, 1999.
4 D. Elson, "Labour markets as gendered institutions: equality, efficiency and empowerment issues" in World Development, vol. 27, No.3, pp 661-627, 1999.
5 Z. Tzannatos, "Women and labour market changes in the global economy: growth helps, inequalities hurt, and public policy matters", in World Development, vol. 27, No.3, pp551-569, 1999.

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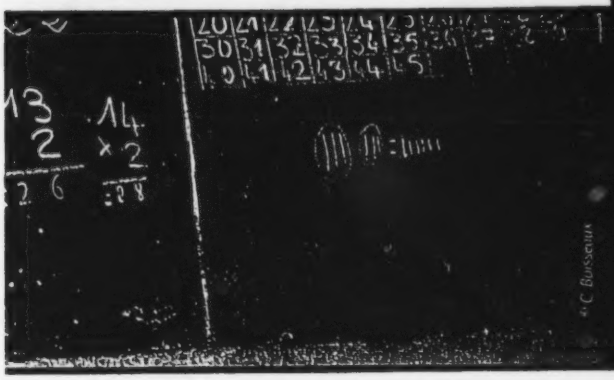

PAY EQUITY: A LONG-STANDING CONCERN OF THE ILO

The principle of equal pay for work of equal value has been a main concern of the ILO since its inception in 1919. It is embedded in the ILO's Constitution and is the subject of the Equal Pay Convention No.100 and Recommendation No. 90 adopted in 1951. More recently, it has been reaffirmed in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, adopted in 1998. The other fundamental principles and rights covered by the Declaration include freedom of association and the right to effective collective bargaining, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of forced or compulsory labour.

The Declaration follow-up entails, among other things, the preparation of Global Reports that ascertain the state of affairs in respect to each principle, examines national efforts by ILO constituency to realize them, as well as highlighting recurrent and emerging problems, and challenges. The findings of the Global Reports help set priorities for future ILO technical assistance.

In June 2003, the first Global Report on the principle of the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation will be released. Preparatory activities addressing pay equity among other key matters are currently underway. (www.ilo.org/declaration)

or show a significant degree of coordination often produce greater levels of equality.

Minimum wages can play a role in reducing pay differentials since women tend to be clustered in low-paying jobs. Low wages and pay inequalities are strongly influenced by the interplay of gender, race and ethnic origin. In the UK, for instance, black women are more likely to be affected by low wages in the public sector, whilst, in the USA, African-American women earn two-thirds of men's wages and Hispanic women earn less than 60 percent.

Why is it important to address pay inequity?

Addressing pay inequity between men and women is crucial to achieving genuine gender equality at work. As long as the market values women's time less than men's, no lasting improvements in the economic status of the former can be expected, no matter how much training, maternal and paternal leave or child care facilities are provided.

Not only is unequal pay unfair, it is also inefficient. It excludes competent women from engaging in greater productive activities and often results in work being performed by less able men. This discourages women from fully realising their own productive potential and may reduce important output gains[3]. Pay inequities can be also costly for enterprises, since it can lead to litigation.

The nexus between equality, productivity and quality of public services has been documented as well as the link between good quality public services and poverty reduction. If decisions about pay in the public services are made objectively and fairly, this will frequently result in greater staff motivation, lower absenteeism and sick leave. These factors in turn can increase the quality of customer services thus raising the profile of the public sector.

Last but not least, pay equity helps empower women. It lifts women's status as a result of the fair recognition of the value of their work and their enhanced economic independence, thus enhancing their self-esteem.

Strategies for addressing pay inequity

One of the main obstacles in effectively addressing pay inequity is the general lack of understanding and awareness of this issue which is complex requiring ad hoc expertise and skills. Achieving pay equity can also be time-consuming and costly, both in terms of the process and techniques required to determine the extent of the pay gap and the resources needed to correct the imbalance. Furthermore, employers and trade unions tend to regard pay equity as a non-priority issue. In the labour movement, pay equity is still largely perceived as a women workers' concern and not an issue of strategic interest to all workers. In developing countries with high unemployment rates, an expanding informal sector and deteriorating real wages, pay equity is often perceived as a luxury. For economies in transition, the main concern is even more basic, e.g. non-payment of salaries.

Despite this situation, a recent survey carried out by Public Service International (PSI) and the ILO (see box) showed that public service trade unions, particularly in developed countries, have accumulated a considerable wealth of experience through their successes and failures which can provide valuable insight for future action. So far the main devices used to promote pay equity have ranged from mainstreaming gender issues in collective bargaining, running pay equity campaigns, taking cases through courts and developing gender-neutral job evaluation schemes. The improvement of statistics and indicators on pay equity, the dissemination of good practices, the promotion of a minimum living wage, especially in developing countries, were identified as areas warranting special attention in the future.

The success of any pay equity strategy lies first and foremost in a strong labour movement that promotes equal representation of women in trade union structures and decision-making processes. This reflects a strong commitment to gender equality and should more widely permeate organisational and recruitment strategies. ◆

The nexus between equality, productivity and quality of public services has been documented as well as the link between good quality public services and poverty reduction.

Manuela Tomei
ILO in Focus Programme on Promoting the Declaration, research and review of discrimination and gender equity issues
Editor of upcoming Global Report on Discrimination

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The IMF's Model Pupil in Latin America: Chronicle of a Dismal

by Marta Maffei
General Secretary of CTERA

For the past 15 years, Argentina has been the Latin American country which most rapidly and consistently implemented the IMF's recommendations. The wholesale privatisation of industries and services, combined with lack of foresight, corruption and institutional decay, have generated an economic and social crisis of unprecedented proportions in the country.

During this period, financial capital was able to move without any restrictions, and the profits accumulated through speculation were transferred abroad on a massive scale. The door was thrown wide open to imports, while no subsidies or protection were given to local production. The economy became increasingly dependent on imported goods, and the profitability of exports decreased. Unexpectedly, as the Argentine economy grew, the more the country became indebted – to the point where it could no longer honour any of its commitments. In 2001, the then Minister of the Economy, Domingo Cavallo, designated large portions of the tax revenue to the re-payment of the debt, while hardly any provision was made for wages, pensions and social services. This gave rise to a huge social conflict, but still Cavallo was unable to meet the deadlines for repayment of the debt.

Economic stranglehold

National industry, utterly unable to compete with the products from countries that made use of slave labour and/or advanced technology, was virtually wiped out. Hundreds of thousands of businesses closed down and unemployment became the primary cause of poverty, violence and the disintegration of the family and society at large. The situation was compounded by a lack of government policies to mitigate the effects of job losses. According to official figures, 22% of the workforce is currently unemployed, while 23% works half time or is underemployed. About 60% of employed workers have "irregular" jobs, which means they are not covered by the social security system and have no health insurance. In December 2001, tax revenue fell by 40%.

Poverty has increased by 300%. In 1985, the poor made up 13% of the population; today they account for 42%. Most of the poor are children, and most children are poor. No less than 56% of children under 14 are living in poverty (14% are classed as indigent). The concentration of wealth has reached outrageous levels. The ratio between the lowest and the highest salaries is as much as 1/50. Today 87 corporations pull all the strings of the economy.

From dictatorship to cosmetic democracy

It should be recalled that the current economic "plan" began during the military dictatorship that had seized power in 1976 and murdered 30,000 citizens, sowing terror and demobilising the country's vital social forces. This destruction of Argentina's social fabric enabled the subsequent establishment of predatory and corrupt civilian governments under no more than a semblance of democracy.

The general election in 1999 resulted in a centre-left alliance government whose promise of far-reaching changes raised hopes among the people. However, under the presidency of Fernando De La Rúa, the government made a post-election pact with the most concentrated economic groups and slavishly implemented the policies dictated by financial interests. President De La Rúa showed himself weak and irresolute. Ignoring the changes demanded by civil society, he tolerated high levels of corruption and patronage.

The government was unable to find a response to the demands put forward by the dominant economic factions. These factions, including those linked to the international financial establishments, wanted economic policy that benefited their own purposes: such as an absolute one-to-one convertibility between the peso and the dollar, and no restrictions on bank fees or the flight of capital from the country. Export-oriented groups were insistently pressing the government to devaluate the national currency to increase their profit margins.

A spiral of impoverishment and exclusion

The economic situation steadily worsened until it became unmanageable. The sheer size of the foreign debt (20% larger than the country's GDP) and the refusal of the international financial bodies and the U.S. Treasury to continue providing economic help kicked off the seemingly endless downward spiral. 40 months of recession had also brought countless small and medium enterprises to ruin.

Then, irrational adjustment policies were implemented, including cutbacks on wages and pensions, and the scrapping of welfare programmes and social improvement plans. Things came to a head in December 2001 when the deposit accounts, wages and savings of ordinary people were seized by the banks in an attempt to

Editor's note: article submitted on 14 January

Marta Maffei is also President of EI's Executive Board and of EI's Regional Committee for Latin America.

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replenish their coffers, emptied by the economic groups. Growing poverty, exclusion and unemployment engulfed the middle classes, who thus became "the new poor".

Under these conditions, in mid-December, marginal social groups (whose actions were facilitated by provincial governments in order to speed up the downfall of the Alliance government) looted several shopping centres. When the De La Rúa government tried to declare a state of emergency and implement repressive measures, a mass demonstration – largely made up of the middle classes, badly hit by the latest economic decisions – spontaneously flared up. Defying the restrictions on the right of association, thousands of people joined the demonstration, beating on pots and pans as they chanted slogans calling for the resignation of the authorities and an end to repression and corruption. **For the first time in several decades, the middle class felt seriously threatened and took to the streets.**

On 20 December 2001 the President stepped down. Five would-be presidents followed over the next 12 days. Finally, on 1 January, Senator Duhalde, former Vice-President under Menem and once Governor of the largest Argentine State, the Province of Buenos Aires, was appointed to complete the presidential mandate until December 2003.

It is apparent from the appointment of Duhalde that the export-oriented group has ascended. The national currency had been tied to the U.S. dollar for the past 11 years and has been allowed to "float". To date, the Peso has lost 40% of its value.

It is also apparent that workers are once again the losers: wage levels are frozen, deposits and savings are still being withheld by the banks, and in several provinces there is no certainty that wages in arrears will be paid. The hastily implemented devaluation has been followed by price increases that financially squeeze workers even further.

New trade union strategies

Trade unions in our country, with the exception of the CTA (*Central de Trabajadores Argentinos*), of which CTERA is a member, have a long tradition of involvement in party politics and corruption. Through their complaisant silence during the preparation and implementation of destructive market policies, they contributed to undermining the image of trade unionism and bear considerable responsibility for worsening industrial relations and living conditions of workers.

Unemployment; changes in industrial systems, materials and methods; the abandonment of traditional production in favour of services; work from home, etc. – all these factors combine to make workers lose control of the production process and hence the bargaining power they used to enjoy. At the same time, the constant adjustment and worsening of working conditions, together with growing unemployment, generate an explosive social situation further fuelled by the decline and the weakening of the state and its blatant involvement in the process of economic concentration. In the case of Latin American countries, this crisis is aggravated enormously by endless corruption and the authoritarianism of political power.

In this context, trade unions are forced into a continuous struggle to uphold the interests of workers in the face of a social, political and economic situation, which, paradoxically, renders sectoral demands less viable. Clearly, unless the basis on which wealth is accumulated changes and unless we achieve a fairer distribution of that wealth, the prospects for improving the individual sectors will continue diminish. This is why trade unionism today must be "smarter", more politically oriented, more strategic, more aware of the need for solidarity with all workers, and more global.

The changes in trade union culture basically depend on a change in the social ethos. We must find a way out of single-track thinking, consumerism, and subservience to short-term goals, and triviality. We must overcome the primacy of blind economics and fragmentation that have so strongly taken root in our soulless, cynical, hopeless and individualist societies – societies which are strongly influenced by mass media, controlled and directed by powerful groups with vested interests.

Against this background of poverty, failure and exclusion, public education has come under attack. The first victims are of course the students themselves and the teaching profession. Yet precisely at this juncture public education, as an essentially popular and democratising institution, is called upon to play a substantive role. Public education must make the difference for our ailing societies. It must become an opportunity, a reason for hope, an effective tool for the underprivileged, exploited and vulnerable. Education must enable working people to recover a leading role, to organise and develop their capacity for action. The "pots and pans mobilisation" in Argentina shows that this is possible. It is only a beginning; the movement is still weak, but it has shown that it is a force to be reckoned with, and it is defiant. This is a far cry from the resignation and fear that the dictatorship tried to inculcate in us. Today it is the middle layers of society that have mobilised, but their struggle is a lesson for the people as a whole.

In this context, trade unions must overcome old habits and ways of thinking in order to fulfil their role as catalysts of social change and ensure solidarity for the benefit of working people everywhere. The limitations to which workers are subject significantly restrict the scope of trade union action. But for this same reason, it must be realised that unions will recover their power, dynamism and vitality only to the extent that workers themselves recover these qualities. Public education is instrumental in bringing about the cultural changes required to build a new national ethos based on democracy, pluralism and solidarity. ◆

GENERAL MISTRUST

Enormously fragmented, Argentine society mistrusts everything. It particularly mistrusts politicians, trade unionists and, in general, established powers. People have lost a tremendous amount of faith in the Supreme Court of Justice for systematically legitimising policies that resulted in the plundering of our country. In spite of this, surveys show that people regard public education as the most trustworthy institution.

Marta Maffei
General Secretary CTERA

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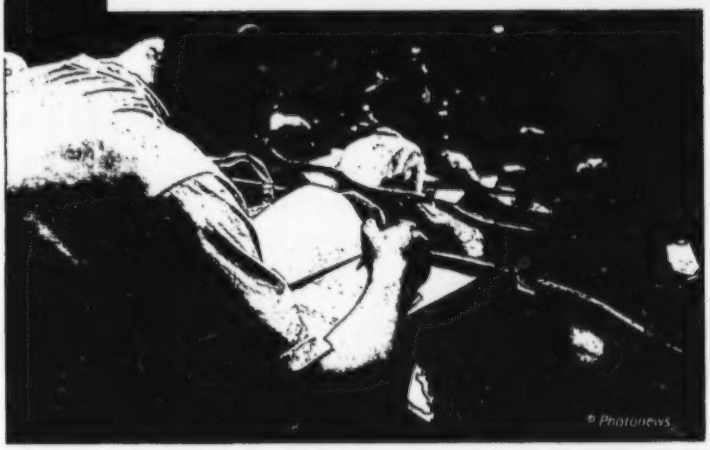
What GATS Means to Higher Education



"Contrary to popular belief, there is significant trade in higher educational services: a rough estimate puts the value of this trade at about $US 30 billion in 1999, equivalent to 3 percent of total services traded in OECD countries[1]."

In 1996 the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) was extended to educational services, in particular, higher education. To date 38 member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have already agreed to liberalise at least one sector of their education systems. Of these 38 countries, half have made commitments with regard to at least four of the five sectors identified in the GATS classification[2]. They have therefore undertaken to reduce or even completely eliminate the barriers to the supply of educational services from abroad. The leaders in educational trade include Australia, the United States, New Zealand and Britain.

The WTO Conference on Trade in Services met twice in the autumn of 2001 and will meet again in March 2002. WTO member countries have until 30 June 2002 to formulate their claims vis-à-vis other countries and until 31 March 2003 to indicate which areas they are prepared to liberalise. Australia, New Zealand and the USA have already submitted new proposals for multilateral negotiations, mainly with regard to higher education – a move that is obviously related to the fact that the educational services in these three countries are respectively the third, fourth and fifth most important "suppliers" world-wide.

Although higher education has been "internationalised" for a very long time now, globalisation and the extension of the GATS to the education sector have considerably modified the environment in which higher education establishments must function. In a climate characterised by the growing mobility of persons, capital and knowledge, as well as by a sharp increase in the demand for higher education, new information and communication technologies are today creating opportunities to broaden the market of educational services.

Through their organisations, teachers, students and representatives of higher education establishments are mobilising to assess the impact of the GATS and to draw the attention of the authorities and public opinion to a number of serious problems.

"Education is not a commodity"

For the National Union of Students in Europe (ESIB)[3] *"the notion that education is a tradable commodity with the same rules as any commercial product is unacceptable."* The ESIB believes that the right to education in general, and access to higher education in particular, should not under any circumstances be regulated by market forces.

For their part, four major organisations representing higher education institutions[4] have issued the Joint Declaration on Higher Education and GATS[5]. Referring to the 1998 UNESCO Declaration[6], which was widely ratified, the document states that *"higher education exists to serve the public interest and is not a 'commodity'."* The joint Declaration also insists on the need to establish international regulations and to help developing countries expand and improve their national education systems rather than weaken the latter by imposing "foreign models" from abroad.

The Third Congress of EI of course addressed the implications of the commercialisation of education. The resolution published following the Round Table on New Information and Communication Technologies refers to these issues (see www.ie-ie.org). EI's Congress also adopted a specific resolution on the transnational provision of higher education (see box), and a special task force was appointed to implement the resolution. Several EI affiliates (see references) have conducted a number of studies and research projects which show that, while it is difficult *"to predict statistically the impact of liberalisation, especially as distinct from commercialisation..., it is possible to identify trends."*

Some governments and technocrats are arguing that education does not fall within the scope of the GATS by virtue of Article I.3[7], which indeed contains ambiguous definitions open to interpretation. The legal firm Gottlieb & Pears, in consultation with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), concluded that GATS gave such broad definitions of certain concepts, such as *"trade in services"* and *"governmental measures"*, that national authorities were free to interpret

1 OECD, "Trade in educational services : trends and emerging issues", November 2001, p.6
2 The five sectors concerned are the following: primary, secondary, higher, adult education and other.
3 National Union of Students in Europe, www.esib.org, secretariat@esib.org
4 Association des universités et collèges du Canada (AUCC), the American Council on Education (ACE), Association Européenne de l'Université (EUA) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
5 http://www.unige.ch/eua/En/Activities/WTO/welcome.html

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Although higher education has been "internationalised" for a very long time now, globalisation and the extension of the GATS to the education sector have considerably modified the environment in which higher education establishments must function.
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the provisions at will[6]. In the opinion of CAUT President Tom Booth, "*legal opinion leaves us with no doubt as to the inadequacy of the WTO's current protective measures for education.*"

For the British Association of University Teachers (AUT), the GATS agreement inevitably leads to a decrease in public funding, job security, professional autonomy and status, academic quality, and will have a negative impact on academic freedom, intellectual property rights and access to education[8].

The AUT's remarks on academic freedom are particularly telling: "*Insecurity, short-termism, declining individual professional autonomy and the pressure to make research projects and the dissemination of their findings through teaching attractive to commercial sponsors, effects 'locked-in' and emphasised by GATS, are seriously undermining to academic freedom.*"

The AUT, highlighting the impact of GATS on intellectual property rights, points out that "*work completed in the service of for-profit higher education providers would be registered as their property, as they sold it for commercial gain. Especially in combination with the proliferation of short-term teaching contracts, this would create difficulties for members who then went onto work for another organisation. Potentially they could be sued for breach of copyright if they used the same or similar material again. This may even be extended to that material replicated in both research and teaching....*"

Numerous studies and reports show just how urgent it is to carry out an in-depth evaluation of the impacts of GATS on education before going any further down the path of liberalisation. We must ensure that the WTO and its member countries carry out such an evaluation and that, in the meantime, governments submit no new negotiation proposals to the WTO. ◆

TRANSNATIONAL PROVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Third Education International World Congress met in Jomtien, Thailand, from 25 to 29 July 2001:

A. NOTES:

1. The growth of provision of higher education across national borders, utilising mainly internet-based technologies, by traditional universities as well as by solely on-line providers;
2. The participation by a number of universities in joint ventures with for-profit corporations and other higher education institutions for the provision of higher education relying on internet-based materials and technologies;
3. Growing concern among higher education personnel, students and the communities they work with regarding the lack of clear and unambiguous information available in relation to governance structures, quality assurance and accreditation procedures, and employment practices within such joint ventures;

B. BELIEVES THAT:

4. Predominantly on-line higher education providers should be subject to rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure a curriculum developed, taught and under academic control of faculty who have tenure and academic freedom, and this principle should be reflected in international accreditation procedures;
5. It is the responsibility of national governments, international organisations and higher education providers to ensure that the expansion of web-based transnational higher education provision is informed by public interest concerns and objectives, and not solely by profit motives or market forces;

ACCORDINGLY, EI SHOULD:

6. Encourage higher education trade unions to develop strategies for actively organising members across national boundaries to ensure that the employment rights of personnel employed by transnational providers are protected;
7. In conjunction with higher education unions that have already undertaken significant work in this area, develop guidelines for best practice in relation to the provision of transnational education and actively pursue their endorsement and implementation by UNESCO, the ILO, the World Trade Organisation and international accreditation bodies, such implementation to be pursed in conjunction with EI.
8. Such guidelines should address, among other issues, governance structures, quality assurance, the importance of culturally relevant content and modes of delivery, accreditation, intellectual property management and academic freedom.

Monique Fouilhoux
Co-ordinator

6 World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action, UNESCO, 1998.
7 Article I.3 of the agreement deals with services "supplied in the exercise of governmental authority" and defines them as services supplied "neither on a commercial basis, nor in competition with one or more service suppliers".
8 GATS Impact on education in Canada: A legal Opinion – Gottlieb&Pearson commissioned by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, British Columbia Teachers Federation, Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Union of Public Employee, 2001 – www.caut.ca
9 The General Agreement on Trade in Services: An Impact Assessment for Higher Education in the UK – Alex Munn, Association of University Teachers, 2001

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UTDANNINGS FORBUNDET

Wishing Utdanningsforbundet a Long Life

Utdanningsforbundet President Helga Hjetland

Utdanningsforbundet Vice-President Per Aahlin

Despite the tongue-tying name for foreigners, Utdanningsforbundet has a nice ring to it for the 130,000 teachers that the new Norwegian organisation represents.

The decision to merge the two main teachers' trade unions, Norsk Lærerlag and Lærerforbundet, was officially taken by a joint Congress in October 2001. On New Year Eve 2002, the former organisations ceased to exist and Utdanningsforbundet appeared. The new organisation will be headed by President Helga Hjetland, former leader of Norsk Lærerlag, and Vice-President Per Aahlin, former member of the national board of Lærerforbundet.

The merger process has been a long one. In Norway, the history of teachers' trade unions goes back 110 years. In 1892, within a few months of each other, two unions – the forerunners of Norsk Lærerlag and Lærerforbundet – were established. The former for the teachers in primary schools and the latter for those working in upper secondary schools. The number of teachers' unions grew in parallel with the expansion of the Norwegian education system. Then over the past 50 years, there has been a tendency towards unification. Both NL and Lærerforbundet merged with other, smaller unions during this period.

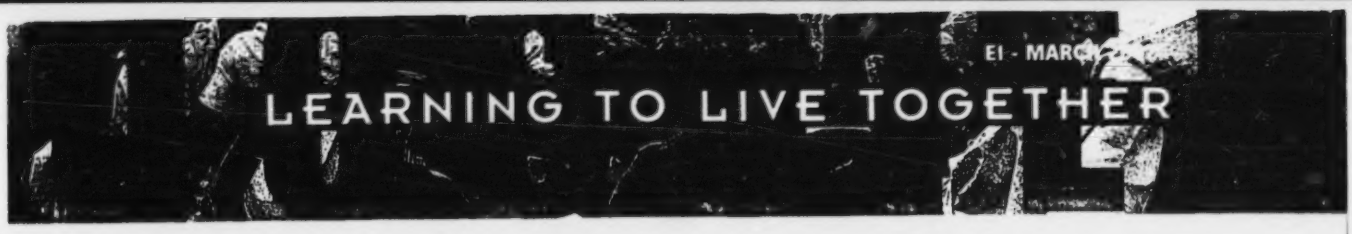
It had been obvious for a long time that the two unions did indeed have common interests. In November 1997 the Congress of NL voted that "a possible merger should be considered", and that "the leaders should engage in talks with Lærerforbundet". The Lærerforbundet National Congress in November 1998 took the same stand. The leaders of the two unions met in January 1999. They decided to launch a three-year democratic process, in which all parts of the union - at all levels - would be engaged in discussions and hearings on every aspect of a possible merger, political and structural. The process also included a ballot among the members, and further discussions at the both national congresses to decide if the merger should continue or not. Then, if all went well, the founding of a new trade union would take place in October 2001.

Jens Garbo
Senior Advisor
Utdanningsforbundet

We are proud to say that the process has been a successful one. We have had many challenges to handle, too many to go into detail, but some factors have been crucial in obtaining the good result:

- Leadership. From the beginning, the process has been conducted by a steering committee consisting of top leaders from both unions. The committee has not been a large one, 7 elected officers and a small number of employees. This has made it possible to keep stability throughout the process. It has also made it possible for the committee to keep pace and act quickly when necessary, without endless debates on every issue.
- Participation and democracy. We have engaged the members of both organisations in thorough discussions concerning all aspects of the merger. Key documents have been distributed directly to all members. On several occasions, there have been opportunities for each member to take part and vote.
- Time factor. We knew such a project had to be handled smoothly and not rushed. Timing is essential. In this case, that meant enough time to have satisfactory democratic processes and, at the same time, enough pace to keep momentum. We decided to give it three years. This proved a successful stategy.
- Influence for each group of members. The span from pre-school to university is a great one. Today there are big differences in wages and working conditions within our membership. Not all parts of what we define as the education system is equally acknowledged. This means that the different groups of members may have different aims and priorities. All of them should feel confident that their group has representatives on all important committees, and that their voices will be heard. To secure this, we have -among other things - established a system of quotas which regulates the composition of all boards.
- Balancing of power and influence. Norsk Lærerlag, with 90 000 members, was more than twice as big as Lærerforbundet, with 39 000 members. From the start it was accepted that both parties, in spite of this, should be treated as equal on the steering committee of the merging process. Thus, this committee had to establish a consensus oriented working method. It also became clear, after many hard debates (!), that we had to prolong this period of equality and balancing of power so that it would last even through Utdanningsforbundets first two years, until the first ordinary national congress, late in 2003. These two years we call a period of transition. In this period, all boards in Utdanningsforbundet, at all levels, will consist of an equal number of representatives from the two former unions.

Presently we have been functioning merely a few weeks. We know that the real merging process, in which we establish our new and common identity, is still in the beginning. Yet we are optimistic and confident. Utdanningsforbundet will surely prove to be the most powerful trade union ever for teachers in Norway! ◆



LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER

Sheena Hanley
Deputy General Secretary

Since September 11th much soul searching and questioning on how some individuals can have so little value for human life – their own and that of others - has led to examination of the role of education in building intercultural understanding and democratic values. What we can see is that regardless of the educational approach adopted we need to deepen our analysis of this topic. We must also remember we reach students who are in school. Who teaches the millions of exploited marginalised children deprived of an education? What lessons do they learn?

Current political objectives in education focus on skill development for a knowledge society. Education indicators show what skills are high on the political agenda. A more rigid, results oriented education system has resulted. Accepted as part of this paradigm competition is viewed as a social value applicable to schools, students and those who work in them.

Few indicators measure how well students are prepared for democratic participation or whether democratic values have been learned.

The hidden curriculum rarely exemplifies good practice in the promotion of intercultural understanding. Rarely is societal ethnic and cultural diversity reflected in staffing in education. Policies exist to encourage minorities to enter teaching, but the political will and positive action measures to move from rhetoric to reality are missing.

Maintaining cultural identity in multi-cultural societies in a globalising world is central to intercultural education. Language, traditions and religion or belief are components that bind societal groups. But groups live and function in a wider world where contact with "others" is inevitable.

The ability to understand, speak and write the majority language of society is a prerequisite for participation in societal life. Every child has to function effectively in the majority language. However, care must be taken that education provided with the intent of allowing pupils to function in society is not education that assimilates. All areas of study must be examined through multiple lenses to ensure that groups are not seen only from the point of view of the majority culture. Education has been - and at times continues to be - used for assimilation rather than integration, and teachers and their unions have a responsibility to make sure this no longer happens.

Language is the bedrock of every cultural group and so every child needs to retain and continue learning his or her first language to permit participation in minority cultural communities.

Students from both minority and majority groups must be prepared to live in a multicultural society. Too often children from minority groups are taught to live with the majority but little is done to prepare children from the majority to adapt.

Respect for and knowledge of other cultures and traditions is a requirement of intercultural education. Human rights education requires students to examine cultural practices of their own community and those of others. Tensions between cultural communities and schools can arise when students question cultural practices and traditions. Parents must understand that intercultural education in a framework of human rights teaches about cultures and about universal values that may be different from those espoused by a particular group. Human rights education does not require any individual to jettison their cultural attachments but it does open the door to questioning the values and practices of all communities.

Differences arise in all societies so skills to resolve conflicts without violence have to be taught. Mutual respect among protagonists is a pre-requisite for successful conflict resolution. Skills for fair resolution of conflicts have to be taught from the earliest stages of education and throughout all levels.

Appropriate teacher training on intercultural practices, human rights and peace education and education for democracy must be integrated into teacher education programmes. These areas of study must be valued as highly as other subjects. Support for teachers who try to promote such education is needed since teaching such skills is often considered as less important than teaching IT or science for example.

Values espoused in the home, community or sports arenas, in the media or in any field must teach that all human beings have intrinsic worth, that no groups are superior to or have more rights than others. The same holds true for cultures, traditions or religions. None have all of the answers.

This dossier gives you the opportunity to sample what some EI members are doing in this field, what governments are saying and provides information from UN special rapporteurs, academics and campaigners on this issue. ◆

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LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER

What Learning to Live Together Means to EI Member

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School plays a pivotal role in the process whereby people acquire a sense of solidarity and learn the rights and duties that link each individual to the rest of society. The cultural diversity we observe, both locally and globally, requires an education system capable of teaching new generations to understand other cultures more fully, to be more receptive to the contributions that other people with different backgrounds make to the common good, and to be able to engage in a dialogue with others on an equal footing.

Citizenship and respect for others are not something that can be decreed by law, but rather, they must be fostered. By transmitting knowledge and skills, education can become a factor capable of either aggravating or mitigating tensions. Education can fuel confrontation or strengthen the cohesion and integration of social groups; it can teach people tolerance or be a hotbed of bigotry.

As highlighted by the FETE-UGT **(Spain)**, one of the key aims of education in the 21st century must be to "teach people to learn" in accordance with a new conception of active citizenship and multicultural coexistence.

There can be no genuine development of culture, be it the culture of a group or an individual, nor can other human rights be enjoyed fully, if the right to education is denied or if people are discriminated against in education. All international instruments unanimously affirm that everyone is entitled to education[1]. However, the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education of 14 December 1960 ("1960 UNESCO Convention" for short) is particularly relevant to our objectives because it addresses discrimination in relation to this issue.

Public education against exclusion

Public education and the principle of free, compulsory schooling imply that children from different backgrounds go to the same school. The aim of state schools should be to ensure, through quality education for all, equal opportunities for everyone who completes secondary education. Thus for example, in **France**, UNSA-Education is campaigning for a public and non-denominational education service which will cater to all children, regardless of their racial, social or religious background and regardless of any handicaps affecting them. "This education system has a mission to fulfil in the general interest, namely to turn publicly-funded schools into the locus of cultural integration, where children learn to live together and acquire a sense of citizenship. Such a school must be built on the principles of equity, continuity, non-denominational teaching and free access to all," says Jean Pierre Rulié of UNSA-Education.

The creation of private schools and, more generally, the privatisation of education can lead to the confinement of some ethnic groups into virtual ghettos, breeding incomprehension and fear of others, and is therefore a potential source of conflicts between communities. Consequently, a balance must be found between, on the one hand, public education as an institution based on the fundamental principle of free and equal education, and, on the other hand, the freedom of individuals to choose a type of education which reflects their beliefs or their sense of belonging to an ethnic group.

To some extent, because it inherently tends to create a segregated situation, the creation of separate schools or classes runs counter to the "equal opportunities" and "equal treatment" principles enshrined in numerous international instruments. In **Russia** there is a growing trend to argue for separate classes for boys and girls, reports Nikolay Kolobashkin, Head of the International Department of the Russian union ESEUR. "Some teachers and parents are calling for a differentiated system on the grounds that pupils will be able to pursue their personal development in an environment closer to their gender-specific sensitivity."

In some countries, including **Australia**, ethnic groups claim "the right to be treated as a distinct group, independent of the nation-state's education system" and are demanding separate provision for their education needs on the grounds of this distinct identity.

The 1960 UNESCO Convention requires that separate establishments "for students of either gender" fulfil four conditions to a degree at least equivalent to the conditions applicable to mixed establishments[2]. These conditions concern ease of access, the qualifications of the teaching staff, the quality of the school buildings and equipment, and the syllabuses taught in such establishments. With regards to establishments separated for "religious or linguistic reasons[3]", e.g. schools for ethnic minorities', the Convention requires them to meet two conditions: attendance should be optional and the establishments should comply with any standards laid down by the state, particularly in the case of secondary education.

LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER

Learning to live together: trade unions show the way forward

Trade unionism in general is about a collective approach to issues, problems and challenges. For example, in Israel – where, as apparent from recent developments, peaceful coexistence is a daunting challenge – the **Israel** Teachers Union (ITU) has thousands of Israeli Arab members. ITU provides social activities suiting their social needs, holidays, culture and tradition, and publishes a magazine in Arabic. "Of course all teachers are considered equal partners in all of the union's activities and in terms of duties and rights. ITU organises extensive activities for all teachers, from kindergarten to teacher training colleges, through advanced studies and conferences to strengthen cohesiveness and respect for differences, and to create mutual support", says Abraham Ben-Shabat, General Secretary of ITU.

ITU is an influential actor in the education system and contributes to the establishment of the practical aspects of a multicultural approach. ITU has achieved full equality for Israeli Jewish and Arab teachers both in terms of trade union rights and as regards their professional rights.

In **Kenya**, too, EI's affiliate the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), is striving to build greater cohesion among the teaching profession. "The unity in diversity sought after by the KNUT is a reflection of the situation in Kenya as a nation. In fact, in Kenya, the challenge of 'Learning to Live Together' has been very formidable, as most public and political leaders have rarely demonstrated a serious commitment to this noble objective. In this regard, the KNUT has demonstrated a higher standard than is the norm in Kenya," says John Katumanga, President of KNUT.

In co-operation with several NGOs, the **Salvadoran** union "ANDES 21 de Junio" is working intensively on the issue of delinquency at school, a problem neglected by the government. "El Salvador has lived through twelve years of civil war," explains ANDES General Secretary Arnoldo Vaquerano. "The peace agreements include provisions to promote reconciliation but, in practice, many children whose parents were on opposite sides find themselves together in the same class, and there is still a great deal of resentment. Of course the schoolbooks extol the value of tolerance and solidarity, but feelings of hostility are still rife. The government is not tackling the problem of delinquency in schools even though students are being murdered and some establishments have been pillaged. We regularly organise discussion days on these issues with teachers and have already achieved some positive results," adds Arnoldo Vaquerano.

The teachers' union in **Guatemala**, the STEG, is also striving to palliate the government's deficiencies. "Following the educational reform included in the 1996 Peace Agreements and the establishment of a dialogue process in which all social actors took part through forums in the country's 331 municipalities, we proposed defining the contents of education in such a way as to strengthen national unity while at the same time respecting cultural diversity," explains STEG General Secretary Eduardo Machuca Quiroa. "The STEG believes it is important to promote – through the educational community – civic, cultural, social, moral and ethical values as well as respect for sexual, cultural and religious differences. Unfortunately, the government has failed to meet the commitments made in the Peace Agreements," remarks Eduardo Machuca Quiroa.

Increasing the awareness of teaching staff and providing adequate training

Teachers must be made more aware of the issues involved in multiculturalism and receive adequate training in this area, particularly in regards to the most effective means of combating discrimination. The training of teachers responsible for multicultural or multi-denominational classes is a high priority.

Such training is essential since teachers themselves may be guilty of discriminatory behaviour and, moreover, a poorly managed multicultural class is likely to fuel racist stereotypes. It is the task of teachers to discharge these myths and stereotypes and to help children to develop a sense of respect for others as well as for themselves.

In **Nicaragua**, the multicultural bilingual education programmes available in the eastern region have been phased out by the government. The General Secretary of CGTEN-ANDEN, José Antonio Zepeda – who is a

1 Article 26.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Article 13.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Principle 7 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child; Article 28.1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 1 of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man; Article 8 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; Article 2 of the first Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights, whose negative formulation ("No person shall be denied the right to education.") should not be interpreted as implying exclusively the obligation to refrain from active denial of the right to education.

2 1960 UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education, Article 2 (a).

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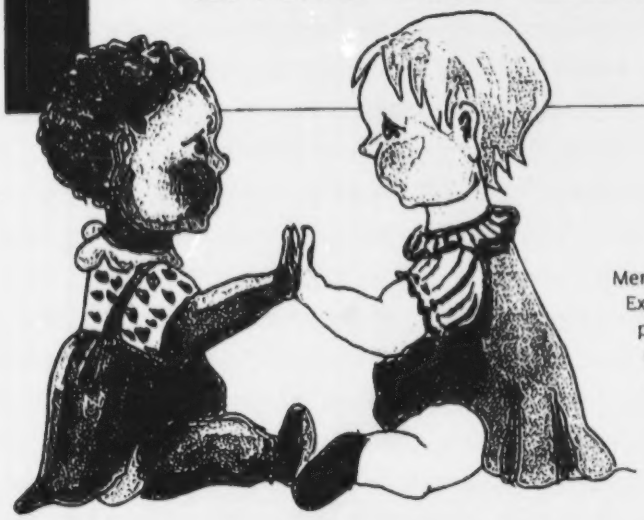
LIVING AND LEARNING TOGETHER



From 17 to 24 March 2002, in Quebec, the "Semaine d'actions contre le racisme" (Week of Actions Against Racism – SACR), will no doubt provide a particularly fruitful opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences, raise awareness and bring the members of different cultures together. Over 70 organisations and associations, including the CSQ, will take part in this event. In co-operation with the Council for Intercultural Relations (a body responsible for advising the government on intercultural issues), CSQ is preparing an educational dossier for teaching staff. The aim is to encourage teachers to carry out a range of activities (both in the classroom and in the school as a whole, within the framework of the official curricula) in order to make young people more aware of existing forms of racism and promote the skills and knowledge required to live together in harmony.

Dominique Marlet
Chief Editor

Member of EI's Executive Board – points out that certain cultures have simply disappeared. The union advocates training teachers from ethnic groups whose cultures are at risk, particularly the Rama and Sumo[5]. "This would enable us to ensure the protection of cultural values," he argues. In fact, the union would like to see all teachers trained to understand these cultures, so that each and every teacher will be familiar with – and respect – all the different cultures that make up Nicaragua. "It is essential for teachers working in areas with specific cultures to come from those communities," stresses the General Secretary of the CGTEN-ANDEN.

The right to education has special significance for ethnic, linguistic and/or religious minorities in terms of protecting their cultural identity and guarding against various kinds of discrimination. A human being's sense of dignity is based on the acquisition of a "cultural identity", which can be described as a set of cultural values by reference to which an individual or a group define and expresses themselves and wish to be recognised. Education and cultural identity are therefore closely intertwined, and any prejudice resulting in discrimination or intolerance is an attack on human dignity. A number of international instruments recognise the specific rights of minorities, while at the same time subordinating the exercise of these rights to certain conditions which have been established, basically, to preserve social cohesion and the unity of the state.

For over a decade now, the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec* (CSQ) has been taking a close interest in "intercultural education". On the basis of an initial study entitled "*Apprendre à vivre ensemble, Immigration, Société et Education*" (Learning to Live Together: Immigration, Society and Education)[6], the CSQ adopted an intercultural education policy covering all aspects of school life. "CSQ intervenes in a number of ways, notably through local committees and by monitoring school regulations, to ensure that educational establishments are free from discrimination or racism. In some situations we strive for a reasonable compromise (for example, no pork meat or the availability of a vegetarian dish at the cafeteria), but the bottom line in all cases is compliance with the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms," explains Jocelyn Berthelot, a researcher at CSQ.

CSQ also promotes measures to facilitate access to teacher training for members of ethnic and cultural minorities, in order to reflect social diversity of the community in the teaching and support staff.

Some unions offer direct assistance to teachers faced with difficulties in the exercise of their profession. In **Israel**, for example, the ITU has set up a "hotline" accessible 24 hours a day to help teachers cope with (and thus combat) violence. "We also assist through different curricula in eliminating violence in the classroom," says Abraham Ben-Shabat, General Secretary of ITU.

Schools, a place to practise democracy

Education must be based on the fundamental values of solidarity, tolerance and understanding between people. Teaching common values and ideas is fundamental. The basic principles of democracy, tolerance and human rights have to be incorporated in the curricula of all education systems, but to become meaningful they must be practised.

"Schools are not islands, and all actors responsible for the wellbeing of children – both in the education system and beyond – should co-operate in transmitting the values of tolerance, which will help students find a place in society," notes Martin Kircz, a teacher and a member of the Executive Board of the **Dutch** union AOb. This is the concept of "broad school" (*brede school*), which has found a great deal of favour in the Netherlands.

For its part the **French** UNSA-Education argues that the public education service should accord an increasingly important role to its users (i.e. the students themselves and their parents) and work in partnership with all those who contribute to young people's education, including community educational associations, businesses, other government departments, etc. In this way public education will move towards new methods and practices which enable teaching to become more individualised, while at the same time promoting a sense of citizenship, respecting young people's fundamental rights, such as the freedoms of expression and association, and more generally giving young people a greater say[7].

It is essential to equip teachers and students alike with effective tools to help them combat prejudice and intolerance if we want to build a society composed of responsible citizens who are more aware, more caring, and capable of reacting against the forces that threaten the general interest as well as the interests of all the various minorities. ◆

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3 Ibid. (3).
4 Ibid.
5 The Rama language is considered by the UNESCO to be "in grave danger of extinction", Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing, UNESCO, 2001, p. 78.
6 Editions St-Martin-CSQ, 1989.
7 UNSA-Education has published its comments in "Pour une société éducative. Une réflexion syndicale sur l'école et la société", éditions FSU 2001, ISSN 1158-4580, with a preface by Pierre van Leeuwen.

RIGHT TO EDUCATION

It is a comfortable, albeit erroneous, assumption that children have the right to education all over the world: international law tells us how states should behave, not how they do behave, explains the Special UN Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Katarina Tomasevski.

Multiple assertions in international law that education is a right, not to mention the vast number of recommendations and frameworks for action, are tools for action - but action itself is missing. One could easily apply the rule of inverse proportion and say that action is missing where it is needed the most.

Examples where action in needed - and sorely missed - can be revealed through a quick *tour d'horizon*. The right to education is affirmed in the constitutions of 142 countries, while there is no such guarantee in at least 44 countries. In 37 countries the right to education is formally restricted to citizens and legal residents[1].

Moreover, the right to education is confined to citizens in quite a few countries. The lack of citizenship does not affect only foreigners, but also domestic minorities. Serbs in Croatia or Tamils in Sri Lanka tend to experience obstacles in access to citizenship, as do their children in access to education. The foreign-domestic distinction pales in significance in the case of the internally displaced. Although in their countries, children of internally displaced people are often denied access to education because they lack residence certificates. Moreover, obstacles that are invisible from laws and statistics preclude access to education for the internally displaced. The Special Representative on Internally Displaced Persons has emphasised "fear of the identification of children for what they are and repression or reprisals that may target the family if children are sent to school."

The absence of education for victims of armed conflicts dooms them to remain recipients of assistance while preventing them from becoming self-sustaining. Water, sanitation, medical services, shelter, clothing and food constitute the 'survival package' are conventionally offered through humanitarian relief. Education may or may not be included in this package. If it is included, decisions on who teaches what and how can have profound consequences. Even the choice of language can have a lasting detrimental effect on social integration, as was documented in "the polarisation of Dari- and Pashtu-speaking refugee communities in Iran and Pakistan [now] with little opportunity to learn each other's language"[2].

Education is commonly discussed in quantitative terms alone and there is a general craving for more of it. In countries, which have just undergone warfare, pleas for education in an attempt to return to normal life often means reverting to pre-war education. The extent to which education had actually contributed to warfare is questioned only if extreme examples of advocating genocide are found in textbooks. Otherwise, education is assumed to have been benign which is often not the case. One example suffices to illustrate how mathematics can be taught: "One maths book, printed in the US during the Afghan war, offered the following problem: 'If you have two dead Communists, and kill three more, how many dead Communists do you have?'"[3] ◆

44 COUNTRIES PROVIDE NO CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEE FOR EDUCATION

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Botswana, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibuti, Dominica, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nauru, Niger, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu, Zambia.

© Annual report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Katarina Tomasevski, 11 January 2001, E/CN.4/2001/52

IN SIERRA LEONE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS IDENTIFIED EDUCATION AS CRUCIAL FOR RESTORING SOCIAL COHESION. CONSEQUENTLY, A NEW EDUCATION ACT HAS BEEN DRAFTED WHICH DEVOLVES MUCH POWER TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES SO THAT COMMUNITIES CAN HAVE GREATER INFLUENCE OVER THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN.
"RECOGNISING THAT ILLITERACY CONTRIBUTES TO THE FRAGMENTATION OF SOCIETY, GOVERNMENT HAS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED ITS INPUT TO ADULT LITERACY," STRESSES MR. ABASS M. COLLIER, DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION OF SIERRA LEONE. THE CURRICULUM HAS BEEN UPDATED. PEACE, POPULATION, CITIZENSHIP AND AIDS EDUCATION HAVE ALL BEEN BLENDED INTO EXISTING SYLLABI. ADDITIONALLY, GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TRAUMA COUNSELLING HAS BEEN MADE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SYSTEM. (dm/EI)

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1 Commission on Human Rights - Annual report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Katarina Tomasevski, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/2001/52 of 9 January 2001, paras. 66-67. http://www.right-to-education.org/index2.html

2 Commission on Human Rights - Analytical report of the secretary-general on internally displaced persons, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1992/23 of 14 February 1992, paras. 70-71.

3 Rogh, A.B. - Education for Afghans. A Strategy Paper, Save the Children and UNICEF Afghanistan, Peshawar/Islamabad, July 1998, p. 33.

Common Kinds of Discrimination in Education

In his report[1] to the World Conference Against Racism in Durban, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance produced an outline of the types of discrimination in education.

Mr Amor Abdelfattah identified common forms of discrimination that often flow from deliberate state actions. Such identifiable discrimination derives from state-established policies, regulations and other material conditions relating to the organisation and content of education. He went on to refer to discrimination and segregation arising out of negative attitudes on the part of states, when the discrimination is the result of inactivity.

DISCRIMINATION BY ACTION

An examination of certain state practices reveals three attitudes that might be described as discrimination by action: impermeability, domination and marginalisation.

Impermeability

Impermeability arises when the education system is intentionally or unintentionally incapable of taking into account the specific expectations of certain ethnic and/or religious minority groups. For example, in countries where there are many indigenous populations, official systems of education may be unable or unwilling to incorporate the values of these populations' cultural identities. In particular, discrimination occurs when the education system delivers forms of education whose content clash with the beliefs and convictions of pupils belonging to minority ethnic groups. This may arise in connection with sex education, sports and music.

The organisation of education can also pose problems in relation to the weekly rest day, tolerance of certain religious rites or attitudes to dress.

Domination and assimilation

The policy of assimilating minority children in a way that forces them to lose their identities may take a variety of forms. It may be material and direct or it may be based on psychological and moral conditioning. One form of this is the affirmation of at least the partial superiority of the culture, language and religion of the group exercising the domination. Generally speaking, this concerns the glorification of the dominant culture, including its language, and the devaluation of the cultures, traditions, standards and languages of minorities. Domination finds a fertile breeding-ground in education as it is the most effective way of shaping people's minds. School curricula and classroom books abound in examples of this conditioning which, by approximation or by falsehood, states that the history, culture and language of the dominant group have always been, and will be, superior.

Sometimes the domination steps outside psychological conditioning and is accompanied by actual physical discrimination. Obvious examples of this are found among minority groups under military domination and may include raids carried out by occupying forces on schools attended by the children of minorities.

Physical domination may also take the form of a ban on the use of a minority group's language: for example, some children are alleged to have been beaten for speaking their language at school and teachers can be arrested if they acknowledge the existence of the language and culture of the group in question.

Marginalisation and devaluation

Marginalisation is the direct outcome of the first two types of discrimination flowing from a desire on the part of the dominant group to ensure that minority children remain on the fringes of the education system. Extreme examples of this involve refusing them access to education. This refusal, the most serious form of discrimination against the children of minorities and migrant workers, has been identified in numerous United Nations human rights treaties: often states try to claim inadequate capacity in the relevant schools.

Another attitude consists in knowingly degrading anything that is linked to cultural features of minority groups. This may take the form of what appears to be a legitimate pedagogical approach, but actually contains racist stereotypes. An example of this is the inclusion in a textbook of a discriminatory picture with the accompanying sentence: 'The gipsy stole the duck'.

Damaging representations of girls in society and praise for polygamy in schoolbooks are also likely to perpetuate discrimination between the sexes, instead of promoting tolerance. Similarly, the imposition of a strict code of

1 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Preparatory Committee, Second session (Geneva, 21 May – 1 June 2001, Item 6 of the provisional agenda, Racial discrimination, religious intolerance and education' prepared by Mr Amor Abdelfattah, Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance, 3 May 2001, A/CONF.189/PC.2/22 Original: FRENCH

2 'Roma' refers to a gypsy culture that is found throughout Europe.

3 See report by Mr Maurice Glèlè-Ahanhanzo on racism and racial discrimination (E/CN.4/1999/15, paragraph 84).

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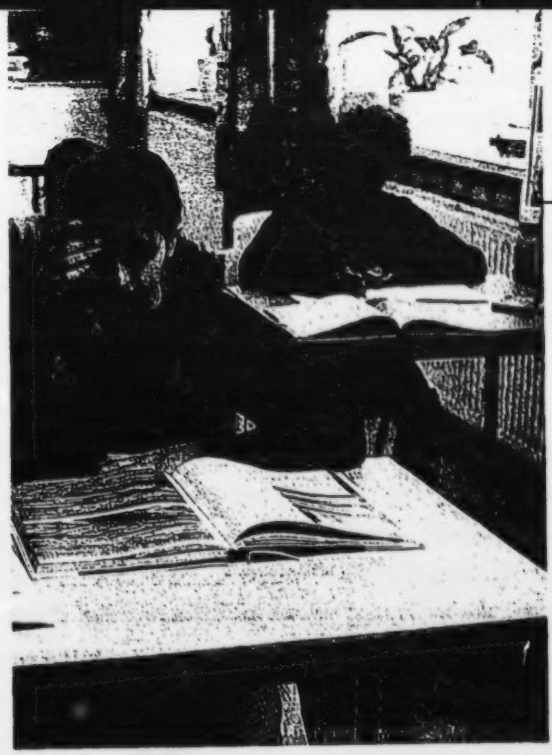

conduct that forces women to remain in the home and prevents girls from attending school is a discriminatory attitude contrary to the relevant principles of international law. The same may also be said of stereotypes containing a negative representation of women belonging to different minority ethnic and religious groups.

Devaluation may take the form of attitudes concerning the educational environment of pupils who, for ethnic reasons, may have to attend a special school for children with learning difficulties, or else are simply told to sit at the back of the class. 'disproportionate numbers of Roma children[3] are relegated to second-class educational facilities ("special schools") designed for pupils thought to be suffering from intellectual or behavioural deficiencies."[4] Others are put in separate classes, or are the victims of discriminatory treatment in the school itself (e.g. separate ceremonies for the awarding of certificates and different mealtimes)[5].

DISCRIMINATION BY INACTIVITY

Certain aspects of discriminatory practice may be passive, i.e. when the practice is the outcome of one of three kinds of inactivity: non-prevention, the rejection of positive discrimination and the absence or inadequacy of appropriate resources.

Non-prevention

Non-prevention here refers to an attitude of the state that involves not taking the necessary steps to avoid discriminatory situations in the school environment. This is also true of the training of teachers who are given responsibility for managing multicultural or multi-denominational classes: the role of the teacher is to get rid of myths and stereotypes and to help instil in children a culture of respect for others as well as for themselves. Teachers need to be made aware of, and given training in, issues of multiculturalism and appropriate ways of combating discrimination.

Refusal to engage in positive discrimination

The second aspect of discriminatory attitudes takes the form of a refusal to take special measures in support of a particular group. This mostly happens when the organisation of school curricula is not adapted to the needs of minorities. Discrimination occurs when the inactivity leads to preference based on race or restriction that ensures that a minority child is denied a fundamental right. These acts of omission may result in there being no bilingual or remedial classes in the official language or a lack of diversity reflected in the school curricula and teacher training. Often, minorities not only ask for their specific features to be addressed, but say they want to be involved in designing and implementing education policy themselves.

The absence or shortage of appropriate resources

The failure to provide appropriate resources to ensure a form of education that meets aspirations for non-discrimination is an immensely complex matter and has to contend with objective facts, namely the financial difficulties that educational systems are facing worldwide, particularly in developing countries. The reasons most frequently given for not delivering secondary education in the languages of the minorities concern a shortage of money, the absence of competent teaching staff and a wish not to fragment the education system – or even fear of jeopardising national unity.

When the shortage of resources affects ethnic and religious groups unequally, for example in some European countries[5], budgetary cutbacks affect educational programmes aimed at the children of minorities and migrants and remedial classes in particular. Recently, the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination stressed that, in a central European country, 'the situation of Roma population is a subject of particular concern since no improvements have been noted in the low educational level traditionally predominant among members of this minority'[6], and called for palliative measures to be adopted for the benefit of the Roma population, particularly in the fields of education and vocational training. It is only when these measures (or, rather, non-measures) have a negative impact on a particular group's fundamental rights that they may be referred to as unlawful discrimination. ◆

4 Op cit.
5 See in particular the 14th report from Finland to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/320/Add.2, chap. V, sect. E, subsect. 4).
6 Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) 54th and 55th sessions (1999) (A/54/18, paragraph 282)

SPECIAL UN RAPPORTEUR

'It all starts in the mind: a battlefield warrior is first

The right to education (e.g. equal access, compulsory and free of charge) completely loses its reason for being if education itself in any way fosters racial discrimination and religious intolerance.

Education is both a fundamental right and an essential means of enjoying other human rights[2]. It allows economically, socially and culturally marginalised people and groups to break out of the cycle of poverty and exclusion, to play a useful role in society, and to develop a sense of their own dignity.

A number of international instruments focus specifically on the objectives that education should be aiming at, despite the fact they limit themselves to formulating or re-stating general principles instead of identifying a precise content of education (see page 24). Of course, the weakness of international legislation is explained, as it is in any branch of the law, by their relative newness, and by the fact that that attention has been focused on them only recently. However, it is worth noting that unlike certain features involved in attaining the right to education (e.g. actually putting an education system in place), non-discrimination cannot be achieved 'progressively', but needs to be immediately and fully guaranteed, and apply uniformly to all states, whatever their level of development may be.

The numerous factors that have a negative influence on education in respect to racial discrimination and racial intolerance include the historical circumstances, the social and economic conditions of groups and minorities, their demographic distribution in the country concerned, their cultural deprivation, the prejudices of dominant groups, the status of minority and majority languages, the political will of the government and of the groups themselves, the inadequacy of the resources, and the absence of intercultural dialogue.

It is not realistic to act on these factors, and imagine that this will immediately have the anticipated result. In fact, some of these factors have nothing to do with education, and require a major input and vast resources on the part of the state and the international community. Meanwhile, others do not call for large resources, but instead need long-term action because they touch on matters that by definition evolve slowly and not always along a linear path.

Responsibility for the education process falls on the whole of society, and not just the state. Several players, including the family, the media, civil society, religious groups, the private sector and NGOs, help to shape children's minds. Combating racism and intolerance in a school environment is also a matter of conviction, and representatives of various religions need to be brought together at national and international level.

Banning and crushing discrimination more robustly

The state has a major responsibility for overseeing the whole of the public and private education system so that it can detect *de facto* and *de jure* acts of racial discrimination and manifestations of religious intolerance, and ban them and possibly suppress them. States need to adopt precise measures[3] and ensure that they are being implemented effectively, especially with regard to the minimum age for commencing employment, so as to protect vulnerable groups, particularly of an ethnic and religious nature, from dropping out of school early[4].

Restricting the emergence of a separate education system

Whatever may be said in their favour, such systems are not in a position to promote the integration of minorities and immigrant communities, although in some scenarios they are able to protect the rights of ethnic and religious minorities. The state has obligations with regard to recognising qualifications issued by these schools, and for a range of services (e.g. financial help with teacher training, the upkeep of buildings, and awarding subsidies and grants to students) which, when on offer, should be provided on a non-discriminatory basis.

Without exception, and irrespective of what they are called (e.g. separate schools, separate classes or minority schools), separate systems of education must not be administered in a way that they impede these groups from understanding the majority group, particularly its language, culture and religious beliefs.

Teacher training

Reforms, not matter how well conceived, will fail if teaching staff are not well trained or sufficiently committed to combating discrimination. To put it in another way, the role of the teacher cannot be reduced to that of a technician tasked with carrying out laid down procedures, but of a professional able to determine the most appropriate and effective pedagogical approach in a given situation. In particular, it is the duty of teaching staff to help to alleviate tensions between pupils, ensure that school curricula take account of the diversity of the groups, and promote a plural and tolerant form of education and a non-discrimination culture.

1 Les minorités dans le monde, Joseph Yacoub, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1998, p. 159.

2 In its General Comment No 11 (1999) on article 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states that 'in developing countries, 130 million children of school age are currently estimated to be without access to primary education, of whom about two thirds are girls'. The Committee further notes that, in its experience, 'the lack of educational opportunities for children often reinforces their subjection to various other human rights violations' (E/C.12/1999/4, paras. 3 and 4).

3 See the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.

4 See article 7, paragraph 2, of the 1999 ILO Convention (No. 182) on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour: 'Each Member shall, taking into account the importance of education in eliminating child labour ... ensure access to free basic education.'

5 Jacques Delors, Learning: The Treasure Within, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, Paris, UNESCO/Odile Jacob, 1996.

6 A UNICEF report refers to the case of an Italian teacher who had a pupil of Pakistani origin and tried an intercultural approach that involved highlighting Pakistani culture in every lesson. It failed because the child felt he was being put on show: "I'm tired of being a Pakistani," he said, "I just want to be a child" (quoted in A/CONF.189/PC.1/11 (para 97), para. 34, note 41.

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By Abdelfattah Amor, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on Religious Intolerance

a school warrior"

The recruitment of teachers must take account of the specific needs of plural societies and reflect their ethnic variety. Moreover, intercultural education and the fight against xenophobia, racial prejudices and intolerance need to be incorporated into initial and follow-up teacher training courses.

Changing the content of textbooks and classroom materials

Education must develop a positive representation of oneself and of others[3]. Changing the content of textbooks (e.g. on history, geography, language, literature, general culture, and civic and religious education, stories for children and strip cartoons) must impact on all educational curricula whose content is likely to shape the minds of children and adolescents and their future representation of others. Any historical facts (or simply observations), tendentious explanations and insinuations that might exacerbate tensions, or create a negative representation of others, must be withdrawn, and replaced with fresh teaching materials that stress the unity of humankind and the amazing range of its human components, and encourage respect between different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups.

The development of multicultural and intercultural education

Multicultural (or pluricultural) schools that are premised on taking account of racial and/or religious diversity and on drawing up specially adapted curricula are not enough in themselves if we want to deliver an education in tolerance. If we do not want to devalue or over-value different cultures, and thereby avoid a sense of hegemony, fear and intolerance, we need to gradually introduce a form of intercultural education based on a comparative perception of the various cultures, while at the same time taking account of specific local features.

Inter-cultural education cannot be imposed by administrative fiat. The path to tolerance and a positive understanding of others will be long and hazardous. Teachers have a key, educational role, and they must have the tact needed to encourage students to have a spirit of inquiry and avoid the sometimes inconclusive outcomes of intercultural education. It would be wrong to expect pupils to respond in a uniformly positive way to the effects of intercultural schooling. Objective factors such as the influence of tradition, history and religion, and social cohesion play a role; they also have a major influence on whether the implementation of this policy succeeds or fails[4].

An education in human rights

The issue of human rights must have a place in education curricula. What it comes down to, though, is how human rights can be better taught. The pedagogical dimension of this area of education is decisive in relation to the quality of the message received by pupils and students. First and foremost, as the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recommends, human rights and issues of racial discrimination must be taught in a multidisciplinary way so that racism can not claim a scientific basis.

Setting standards at the international level

Standards should be set with a view to adopting interpretative rules that make it easier for states to understand exactly what strategy they need to adopt with regard to non-discriminatory, tolerant education. In particular, this work should focus on the development of education curricula and course books in history and other sensitive subjects, the teaching of which is likely to shape pupils' minds in respect of their perceptions of cultures and civilisations that are different from their own. UNESCO has a key role to play in urging states to adopt appropriate measures in order to examine, and possibly amend, legislation that might be discriminatory in the field of education because of religious beliefs or language.

There is also a need to strengthen control mechanisms through agreements and instruments. Education is the fundamental human right that is necessary for other rights to be fully exercised. It therefore seems entirely logical to draw out all the legal implications of this in relation to the existence of appropriate appeal mechanisms and the effective protection of this right. ◆

International financial organisations such as the World Bank, the IMF and regional banks should fashion their interventions in such a way that the right to education, particularly insofar as it benefits minorities and society's most vulnerable ethnic groups, does not suffer excessively as a result of the burden of debt and structural adjustment policies.

FREE, BASIC EDUCATION SHOULD INCORPORATE A MINIMUM OF INTERCULTURAL CRITERIA:

- Learning two or more languages, according to the needs of the state, and the resources it has at its disposal;
- An inclusion of the heritages of foreign countries, with a view to acquiring a better understanding of other people and fostering a positive representation of their culture;
- Multicultural, integrating teaching programmes that place a high value on the knowledge of different cultures and civilisations and promote a sense of self-esteem;
- The adoption, in multiethnic and multidimensional societies, of general laws that recognise multicultural diversity and embody the principle of intercultural dialogue both in and through education;
- The use of preventive, and possibly repressive, means to combat factors that hinder the promotion of intercultural education, such as xenophobic reactions, assimilative tendencies, discrimination in access to education, the use of education systems that lead to a loss of the history, language and traditions of minority groups and indigenous peoples, and an inability to reproduce the racial, ethnic and/or denominational composition of society in the teaching profession.

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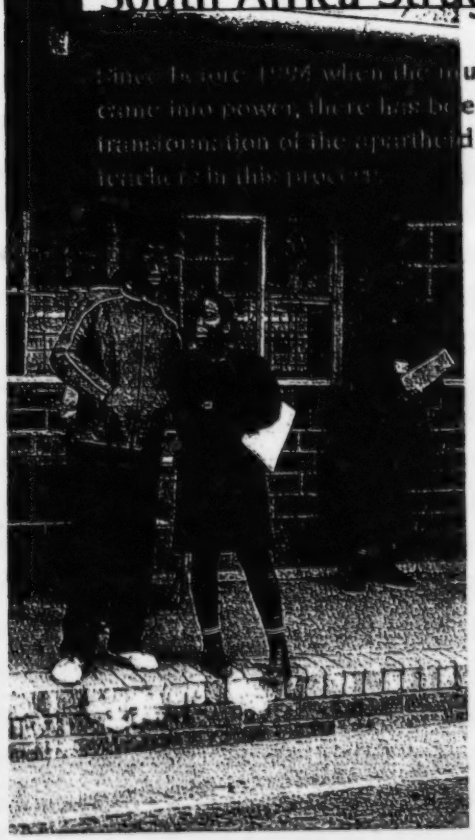
SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa Struggles for Equality in Education



Since before 1994 when the multiracial democratic government came into power, there has been high expectations for the transformation of the apartheid curriculum, and the role of teachers in this process.

Whereas the Apartheid regime used the schools and communities to foster racism, democratic South Africa uses the constitution and laws, such as the Schools Act, to promote democratic school governance, and accountability to all stake-holders. Racism has been replaced by a culture of human rights.

Despite massive gains, the recent report School Register of Needs shows, however, that black learners are still receiving the short end of the stick. Unions insist that the government change its macroeconomic strategy from one that leans towards neo-liberal economic policies to one that puts people first. This report tracks developmental progress, or lack thereof, as it pertains to schools.

It is estimated that 1.6 million school-age children are out of school in South Africa. Presumably financing is the biggest problem – but many of these children qualify for child support grants and do not receive them. Clearly we have a long way to go.

Willy Madisha, President of SADTU
April 2001

More than 45% of South African schools still do not have electricity, 34% do not have telephones, and more than 27% are still without clean water. In addition, 66% of schools (17,907 in 2000) are without adequate sanitation and 11.7% (3,188 schools) do not have any sanitation at all. Although the Constitution proudly states that "everyone has the right to basic education, including basic adult education", the Constitutional Assembly could hardly have intended it to be as basic as these shocking statistics reveal about school conditions. The Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, admitted that progress had been made in reducing inequality in the country's schools, but then admitted that "the backlog is still huge and the differentiation between rich and poor schools within the public system is still unacceptable."

"Today, the apartheid curriculum is still firmly in place in most South African schools", said Jonathan Jansen, from the University of Pretoria, speaking at the National Educational Conference held by the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) in April 2001. "The policies of government have not effectively eroded the firm grip of the curriculum legacy. Teachers still teach the way they taught in the past. Curriculum content still reflects the dominant themes of the past, especially at high schools. Examinations still dictate what is taught, how it is taught, and to whom it is taught. Parents continue to have conventional expectations of schooling and how it is organised. Learners are still measured in terms of common goals or standards, rather than on the basis of "opportunity to learn" or in the context of historical disadvantage."

After 8 years of democratic rule, inequality persists. Poverty reinforces racism! The union has committed itself to fighting policies that take away investment from basic needs and divert it to things like excessive military spending, such as the recent 6 billion Euro arms deal. The reality is that, even with democracy, gross inequality, largely racially and poverty-based, remains in the schooling system.

Thus, South Africa has begun the long journey to create the strategic and effective funding and the political will that is needed to eradicate the remaining legacy of Apartheid within the womb of the new society. For that to succeed, international worker solidarity is essential. ◆

Hassen Lorgat
Media Officer
SADTU

FREE AND EQUAL EDUCATION, BACK IN 1955

On 26 June 1955, The Congress of the People adopted the Freedom Charter, which demanded houses, work, security and for free and equal education. Some of its clauses read as follows:

- The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;
- All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;
- The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;
- Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;
- Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;
- Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;
- Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;
- The colour bar in cultural life, in sports and in education shall be abolished.

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The Role of Textbooks in the Promotion of International Brotherhood

The desire to move from a century of war to a century of peace is one that is shared by all people throughout the world. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, the relations between the various countries of East Asia have become unstable over the issue of historical consciousness. At the center of the controversy is a Japanese junior high school textbook. The nationalist authors and editors of the history textbook deny the realities of the war of aggression carried out by Japan in the Asia-Pacific region a half century ago, making statements such as "the Nanjing Massacre[1] never took place," and "the 'comfort woman' system was commercial so Japan as a state bears no responsibility." Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) approved the use of this textbook despite the fact that it glorifies Japan's wartime history and emphasizes the superiority of Japanese culture over other cultures.

Under the system in Japan, different private textbook publishing firms compile and edit textbooks. Then they submit them to MEXT. MEXT precisely checks each textbook to ensure that it conforms to the purposes and contents specified in the Courses of Study[2]. Only those that pass this screening process are used in schools. Because of this, the government exerts a strong influence on the contents of textbooks, often obstructing academic freedom. Moreover, local boards of education make the decision on which of the authorized textbooks will be use in particular public schools. This system is extremely problematic, as teachers have no say the choice of textbooks. Consequently, teacher pedagogical expertise is undermined.

At the beginning of the 1980s, a similar textbook that distorted the facts of Japan's wartime aggression appeared. At that time, the Japanese government was severely criticized by neighboring Asian countries, and the textbook became a serious diplomatic issue. The government then formulated a new rule stating, "Consideration should be given to our neighboring Asian countries when compiling and editing textbooks." Partly thanks to that rule, and with the deepening friendship between Japan and other Asian countries in the following years, textbooks began to state the truth of the war of aggression. Since the early 1990s, a host of women have come forward to testify that in the past they were forced by the Japanese army to work as 'comfort' women. In the midst of this, the United Nations Human Rights Commission in February 1996 issued a recommendation[3] aimed at the Japanese government. It stated that the "comfort woman" system was a system of sexual slavery and a "crime against humanity." As a violation of international law, the report recommended that the Japanese government fulfill its legal obligations. Because of these moves, the textbooks used in 1996-2001 contained clear references to the truth about Japanese aggression and "comfort women."

Right-wing forces that did not want to recognize the truth of the war of aggression approached the Liberal Democratic Party[4] (LDP), which shared their views, and began a political offensive against the textbooks. MEXT gave in to the political pressure and authorized a textbook that distorts history. Naturally, there was fierce criticism from South Korea, China, and other neighboring countries. At one point there was concern that these tensions might have a negative effect on the 2002 World Cup co-hosted by Japan and South Korea. Numerous citizen-level exchange programs were suspended. There are no other examples of the governments of advanced industrial nations authorizing textbooks that were written by ideological groups equivalent to neo-nazis. The Japanese government is very "backward" in this respect.

However, people of conscience within the education sector stopped this textbook from being used in many schools. When the nationalist textbook is introduced in April 2002, it will only represent 0.039% of the total textbooks in use. It can be said that this reflects the efforts carried out by the Japan Teachers' Union. In relation to the current adoption process, JTU, along with a broad range of democratic organizations, carried out a campaign to prevent passing on to our children a textbook that will completely destroy, not only Japan's relations with its neighbors, but also the values of pacifism and respect for human rights that have been built in the postwar era." During the first half of 2001 alone, at least 1,000 rallies were held around the country in protest of the textbook.

The 3rd EI World adopted a resolution, jointly proposed by the trade unions of China/Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, condeming the revison and distortion of history in Japanese textbooks.

With the expansion of globalization, nationalism is emerging in many countries. In essence, these movements bear a relationship to the textbook problem and the greater issue of historical consciousness. There is an ever-growing role to play for education unions in promoting world peace and multicultural understanding. ◆

There are no other examples of the governments of advanced industrial nations authorizing textbooks that were written by ideological groups that are equivalent to neo-nazis. The Japanese government is very "backward" in this respect.

Shinji FUJIKAWA
Director, Cultural Development
Japan Teachers' Union

1 At the end of 1937, during the Sino-Japanese War, the Japanese Army occupied Nanjing, the capital of China at the time. In the process, Japanese troops engaged in atrocities such as a mass slaughter, killing many Chinese people including women and children.
2 The Courses of Study are revised every ten years. Textbooks are revised every seven years, and go through a screening process each time.
3 Ms. Coomaraswamy report on military sexual slavery by Japan. Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy is the Special UN Rapporteur on violence against women.
4 The Liberal Democratic Party, which has held the reigns of power in Japan throughout the postwar period.

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The Commitment of Governments to Multicultural

'The most formidable challenge we face as ministers of education is to ensure that the systems we run are efficient, imaginative, creative and well equipped to respond effectively to our desire to create a peaceful world.' These were the words of the Education Minister of Bahrain at the UNESCO International Conference on Education held in September 2001. A lot of education ministers made very solemn pronouncements about the role of education in forging societies in which we can each of us live and learn together', but were they just fine words, or were they serious commitments?

'We live in a world,' argued Mohamed Al Ghatam, Minister of Education of **Bahrain**, 'that is still divided along ideological, religious and ethnic lines. If we are genuinely interested in fusing these numerous worlds into one, or at least bridging the gap between them, we must act together to change from a culture of confrontation to one of cooperation, and from a culture of war to one of peace and intercultural dialogue. By so doing, we stand a better chance of getting to know one another, forging new partnerships, creating new ways of achieving cooperation, and developing new approaches to sustainable development. This goes further than mere economic growth, as there is no sustainability without freedom of expression, sustainable democracy and trained human resources. This leads us to the crucial role that education has to play in inculcating new attitudes of openness, of interaction, of discussion, of persuasion, and above all, of global solidarity in the minds of the younger generation. Only through cooperation can such an ideal be realised.'

The views of government representatives from countries now or previously in a state of war, or in the midst of civil conflict, are relevant:

'Social cohesion is perceived as a reality only when individuals have a chance to be heard. In short, when everyone is made to feel that they "belong", and have a stake in the processes and outcomes. With ownership comes responsibility,' said Abass Collier, Deputy Minister of Education in Sierra Leone, 'and the need to respect opposing views.' The **Sierra Leone** government has identified education as crucial to the restoration of social cohesion. A newly drafted Education Act accordingly devolves considerable power to local authorities so that communities have more say in the education of their children. And in recognition of the fact that illiteracy contributes to the fragmentation of society, the government has significantly increased its input into adult literacy schemes. The curriculum has been updated, and peace, population, citizenship and AIDS education have all been woven into existing syllabuses. Guidance and Counselling, with special emphasis on trauma counselling, have also been made an integral part of the system.

In the view of the **Algerian** Minister of National Education, Boubakeur Benbouzid, 'Learning to live together can only objectively come about if each individual in the global village can aspire to a decent life. Living together can only be an attainable goal if each country is permitted to develop economically. Learning to live together also means that no culture may dominate another, and that no civilisation may exclude another.'

'Re-learning to live together is an educational imperative, and a vital cure for the virus that has so fundamentally fractured **Burundi**'s social fabric,' explained Prosper Mpawenayo, the country's Minister of National Education. 'Education for living together must as a matter of priority be aimed at young people, and focus on the inculcation of fundamentally Burundian human values, and on new concepts of human rights, democracy and tolerance.'

Combating illiteracy must also be prioritised in **Guatemala**, according to the Minister of Education, if they are to achieve the training and citizens' participation provided for in the 1996 Peace Accords: 'Learning and citizenship,' believes Mario Rolando Torres Marroquín, 'combine to portray a society ideal and a human ideal in a multilingual, multiethnic and multicultural country.'

In **Rwanda**, war and genocide will long continue to affect the country's education system. 'The country has been abruptly forced to take in huge numbers of refugees who have grown up under different education systems,' explains the Secretary of State for Education, Jean Damascène Ntawukuliryayo. To cope with this, Rwanda has agreed to incorporate into the various school curricula ideas relating to education for peace, human rights, tolerance, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and democracy. The problems that they have encountered have been linked to the shortage of teachers and qualified staff, and of technical materials and financial resources.

In **Haiti**, in the context of follow-up to the Dakar Forum, the government has put in place an education programme in citizenship that was drawn up with a view to providing students with the ability to participate actively in the construction of a new society project. 'The aim,' explains Haiti's Minister of National Education, Gaston Georges Merisier, 'is to turn schools and literacy centres into high-quality settings of democratic practice that will enable children and adults to understand, on the basis of concrete exposure, what their rights and duties are, and how

1 The messages of 108 Ministers of Education on the theme of the 46th International Conference on Education ('Education for all for learning to live together: contents and learning strategies – problems and solutions'), Geneva, 5-8 September 2001, may be consulted on the ICE website: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE/46english/46minise.htm

Education

Citizenship training has also been incorporated into school curricula in francophone Africa. In **Togo**, new civic and moral education programmes (e.g. human rights, civic rights, tolerance, a culture of peace, and democracy) have been drawn up to promote universal values, and instil in young people a sense of belonging to the same nation, of wanting to live there, and of building it and defending it together. 'These ambitious programmes,' said Minister Koffi Sama, 'trigger human, material and financial problems.' In **Cameroon**, the broad aims of national education policies include the training of citizens rooted in their culture, the promotion of national languages, and training in the great universal ethical values. In **Côte-d'Ivoire**, the teaching of civic and moral education has been in place since 1995, but the Minister of National Education, Michel Amani N'Guesson, drew attention to shortcomings, particularly the inappropriateness of teaching content (deemed too theoretical), the lack of initial training for teachers, too little classroom time (four hours a month), the inadequacy of material resources, and the problem of access to teaching documentation.

the exercise of their own freedom is concomitant with other people exercising the rights and freedoms that are theirs.'

Learning together is also one of the main challenges in the **Balkans**. The **Albanian** Minister of Education and Science, Ethem Ruka, reported that "Learning and living together" was one of the main goals of his country's education system: its mission is to equip the new generation with correct concepts of coexistence with different groups and minorities, and respect for other nations and other cultures. 'We intend to create a cooperative climate in participating schools and communities, to develop models of student, teacher and parent participation and support the creation of adequate structures and working methods, to enhance the role of schools as civic, cultural and social centres in local communities and allow people to feel they own their schools, to train teachers and head teachers, to encourage cooperation between different schools and different regions in Albania, and to carry out school-based projects aimed at democratically improving the day-to-day functioning of schools by promoting concepts of coexistence without conflict.'

The Republic of **Croatia** is in the process of carrying out a reform of its educational system (i.e. the structure and standards, curricula, and methods and forms of work) based on the principles of pluralism, coexistence, tolerance and democratic standards. In cooperation with UNESCO and the Council of Europe, Croatia has developed the National Programme of Education in Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship as part of a clear campaign to democratise education, explore differences, promote tolerance, and develop a culture of peace and non-violence. 'Another example of good practice is the programme of education in national minority languages and scripts. This is an outcome of our efforts to create high standards for all national minorities in the country,' says Minister of Education Vladimir Strugar.

In **Bulgaria**, 'one of the major priorities is the production of textbooks that objectively acquaint young people with the history, culture and customs of our neighbours, and thereby overcome negative stereotypes,' according to Education Minister Vladimir Atanassov. 'We believe that regional cooperation should focus mainly on manuals, on setting up international networks for the exchange of ideas on teacher training, and on pupils' active participation in international dialogue. If we want to get rid of negative stereotypes, there is no better way than direct contacts and joint work with people, teachers, scientists, educational decision-makers, and trade union and NGO representatives.'

The importance of dialogue and consultation

In the view of **Chilean** Education Minister Mariana Aylwin, 'The main challenge facing education is how to open up participation spaces in schools for all actors. Implementing ways of delivering coexistence education is a task for all citizens.' She also acknowledged the need to introduce and maintain a dialogue and commitment with parents, schools, teachers and students: 'We need to produce a consensus,' she argued, 'in order to define the tools that will crush the discrimination that deprives children and young people of opportunities for development.'

'To learn about democracy, children have to come across it in everyday life,' said **Denmark**'s Minister of Education, Margrethe Vestager. 'This is the only way that young people can experience the fact that democracy is worthwhile, and that it makes a difference if you take an active part in society. Teachers have a big responsibility in creating a democratic way of living together in the classroom.'

The **Luxembourg** Minister of Education was one of the few to deal with the integration of children with special needs or a disability.

Many Ministers also emphasised the role – a miraculous role, if they are to be believed – that the use of New Information and Communication Technology (NICT) in school will play in ensuring a better understanding among peoples. NICT effectively opens up opportunities for exchanges between pupils, schools and countries, and in this way is a precious educational tool in international understanding. Reducing issues of tolerance and peace to a communications tool, however, seems Utopian. ◆

The use of languages in multilingual countries was also specifically raised, particularly by Education Ministers in **Bolivia, Canada, Eritrea, Kenya** and **Luxembourg**. The **Bolivian** Minister, Amalia Anaya Tejada, also stressed the importance of providing bilingual education in order to enable young people to know, respect and value the cultures, languages and ways of thinking of the peoples who make up the country, while at the same time making sure they have a good command of Spanish, the international language that will give them an opening onto the world.

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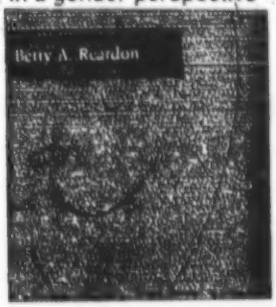
GENDER

By Betty A. Reardon,
Director of Peace Education Teachers College Columbia University of New York

Gender in the Pursuit of a Culture of Peace

Awareness of the fact that something so seemingly part of the natural order or divinely ordained as gender roles is in fact culturally derived and socially sanctioned human invention is an invaluable basis for exploring possibilities for alternative peaceful and just futures.

Education for a culture of peace in a gender perspective



This UNESCO volume, designed as a resource for teacher education, is especially relevant for teaching in secondary schools, but can also be used for the preparation of elementary school teachers and facilitators of non-formal adult education. By providing students with learning experiences in holistic and gender-sensitive human rights and and peace education, teachers develop the skills and capacities to build and maintain a culture of peace.

UNESCO, 2001, ISBN 92-3-103811-7

With the issuing of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on the participation of women in confronting issues of peace and security, came the formal recognition that gender role separation in public affairs is an obstacle to peace. Exclusion of women from policy making has long been acknowledged to be detrimental to development and to the full realization of universal human rights. Indeed, the UN policy of "mainstreaming gender" reflects the significance of the gender lens in viewing global problems. Thus it is evident that gender should also be integral to global education and education for peace, and, I would argue, to all education.

Questions of girls' access to educational opportunities in literacy, technical training, basic through higher education, removal of sexist stereotypes and language from texts, equality in teacher attention and time for classroom recitation were raised and remedial policies were undertaken in many school and educational systems. However, what has remained largely out of the realm of attention are issues related to gender as such: gender relations and roles and positive and negative effects on both men and women, the costs they exact from society and the obstacles they pose to all the goals encompassed in a culture of peace.

Gender affects all aspects of personal and social life. It is a highly significant factor in the future the young can envision for themselves and the world society. Surely, they need to understand gender and all its ramifications and be helped to reflect on what, if any, the practices, circumstances, and consequences of gender roles in their respective cultures and societies are.

Peace education seeks to develop capacities to envision and work for alternatives to the many systems, structures, behaviors and relationships that comprise the culture of war and violence. Using the lens of gender complemented by that of violence – the central problem addressed by peace education – enables educators to illuminate the relationships between the denial of human rights for all and the prevalence of armed violence. Reflecting on gender as a human invention enables learners to contemplate other seemingly immutable institutions, such as war itself.

The research on gender and peace has been largely devoted to analyzing the sexist nature of the institution of war and its particularly devastating effects on women, especially its role in exacerbating all forms of violence against women. Recently, however, research in masculinity – its multiple forms, cultural variations, and its socio-psychological manifestations – has given new insights into concepts of masculinity and their relationship to the legitimization and perpetuation of war. Research has also demonstrated how schooling and educational practice have contributed to those forms of masculinity that encourage aggressive behavior among boys, as well as the forms of femininity that impede women and girls from asserting their equality.

Such research upholds the argument that much of formal education has not been a vehicle for the enhancement of either gender equality or peace. Nor has it made it possible for young men and women to make choices for their own lives with the full knowledge that their sex need not determine the work they choose or their roles in public life. Neither has it developed the complementary potential of women and men to contribute to the development of a culture of peace. The cooperation between men and women necessary to that development requires more than gender equality. It also requires that world society become more aware of both the possibilities and in many cases the need to work for changes in gender roles and relations to free both sexes to work toward the fulfillment of all their human capacities.

The cultivation of that awareness lies largely in recognizing that the need to mainstream gender in education is a necessary complement to mainstreaming gender in global policy making. Both depend upon the active participation of teachers in bringing a gender perspective into their teaching and into the exercise of their responsibilities as world citizens. Toward this end, I would urge all members of the profession to join in UNESCO's efforts to infuse a gender dimension into education for a culture of peace. ◆

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Education For All for Learning to Live Together: Problems and Solutions

by Cecilia Braslavsky
Director of the
UNESCO
International Bureau
of Education

The 20th century saw major advances in universal schooling. But this progress could not prevent the death of more than 180 million human beings who were intentionally murdered. What's more, the vast majority of the political leaders, intellectuals and weapons experts, as well as numerous torturers and medical doctors who were responsible for horrific crimes against humanity, were people who had benefited from many years of education.

In view of these facts, we are faced with a number of crucial questions. What was the point of the effort to provide schooling? Do education systems bear some responsibility for the deaths, crises, conflicts between ethnic groups for generations, violence against women, religious persecution and other forms of victimisation? Can education contribute to peaceful co-existence by teaching people to live together in peace?

In 1998, UNESCO's General Conference addressed these questions and therefore proposed that the 46th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE) should centre on the theme "Education For All for Learning to Live Together. Contents and Learning Strategies – Problems and Solutions". From 5 to 8 September 2001, the Conference met in Geneva, organised by the International Bureau of Education (IBE). It was attended by more than 600 participants, among them 80 ministers and 10 vice-ministers of education, from 127 member states of UNESCO, as well as representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, including Education International, and several foundations.

The basic assumptions underlying the choice of themes and work methods for the ICE were that more of the same kind of education which prevailed in the 20th century will not serve the purpose of learning to live together. The ongoing processes leading to the deepening of economic, cultural and social forms of interdependence must be tackled by achieving a new balance between local and national education as well as education aimed at promoting international understanding. In order to learn to live together, it is essential for people from all cultures to benefit from basic education so as to be able to have a share in public life, in knowledge and, hence, in global wealth and in the efforts to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth.

The exchanges of views at the ICE were intense, professional and respectful. The International Conference Centre in Geneva was alive with interest and a joyful team spirit. Participants in the Conference strove to show through their own example that it is possible to work together on complex and controversial issues.

The conclusions of the Conference reiterated the need to solve several well-known problems, for instance the fact that "the right of children to have free access to schools is far from being respected everywhere in the world..." But new issues were also addressed. For the first time, an International Conference of Ministers of Education unanimously called for the adaptation of curricula (including education plans, syllabuses and work methods in the classroom) and the updating of the contents of education in order to reflect, among other things, "the economic and social changes set in motion, in particular, by globalisation, migration and cultural diversity" and the "ethical dimension of scientific and technological progress". A call was also made to "create within the school a climate of tolerance and respect encouraging the development of a democratic culture" and to "provide a way for the school to function that encourages participation of the pupils in decision-making."

Also for the first time, a Conference of Ministers of Education expressly refuted the mistaken notions that:

1. More of the same kind of education can suffice to learn to live together;
2. Schools can single-handedly overcome the problems that exist in countries and at the international level;
3. Words – whether in a speech, in legislation or in educational curricula – can by themselves achieve the goal of learning to live together.

Participants in the ICE returned to their countries in an enthusiastic mood, equipped with new critical approaches, ideas, commitments and images of exemplary practices which they learned about thanks to videos produced in all parts of the world. In his closing speech, the Director-General of UNESCO urged participants and the world at large to guarantee the quality of Education For All in order to ensure that the 21st century is one in which human life will be enhanced and made more fruitful and meaningful universally.

The 21st century, however, has already shown us new faces of death. Highly educated terrorists murdered thousands of people. Prejudice, hatred and racism are again making the headlines of newspapers and magazines in different parts of the world. Intolerance is conveyed by word of mouth or in writing by uneducated people as well as people who went through many years of schooling. The world is still largely indifferent about the fate of the 35,615 children who died of starvation on September 11th or the 14,000 people who probably contracted HIV/AIDS that same day.

Perhaps the 46th ICE of UNESCO will be seen, retrospectively, as an instance of counter-culture, a small blossom of a growing movement for peace, justice and democracy which eventually flourished into a worldwide tide against today's immeasurable forces of destruction. Perhaps it will not be so. Only the future can tell. ◆

The results and conclusions of the 46th ICE are available at:

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE/46english/46menue.htm

The outcomes of the conference are of particular interest to policymakers as educators who are aware that education alone is not enough; that without quality education, however, there can only be poverty and misery and that, in such conditions, life is constrained and always – though it may not be immediately apparent – violent; and that the contents, methods and practices of education can either be an essential ingredient of learning to live together or a major hindrance to that goal.

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LEGISLATION

By improving on the content of the Universal Declaration of 1948, it must be recalled, the subsequent instruments attest both to the remarkable progress made since 1948 and also, paradoxically, to the persistence of discrimination and intolerance in more complex and certainly more subtle forms. All the instruments studied reveal a continuity and great consistency in the imperative nature of the obligation relating to the non-discriminatory content of education. This obligation has a dual foundation:

Firstly, the general obligation of non-discrimination has been re-affirmed in numerous instruments adopted since the Universal Declaration. Restrictions on this obligation are subject to strict conditions and do not in any way undermine the obligatory nature of the principle[1].

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups [...].
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, paragraph 2
10 December 1948

The signatory states to this Convention agree that
Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; it shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace
UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education, Article 5 a)
14 December 1960

Signatory states undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, [...], with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 7
21 décember 1965

Signatory states shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men:
The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods.
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Article 10 c)
18 December 1979

The child [...] shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, [...], respect for freedom of religion or belief of others
Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, Article 5, paragraph 3
25 November 1981

The education of the child shall be directed to:
The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

The preparation of the child for a responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.
Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29, paragraph 1 c) and d)
20 November 1989

[...] education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and [...] shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups...
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 13, paragraph 1
16 December 1996

We re-affirm the vision of the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien 1990), supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, that all children, young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be [...].
The Dakar Framework for Action, the World Education Forum Dakar, Senegal, 26-28
April 2000, Article 3

[1] See, for example, article 4 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as articles 1, paragraph 4, and 2, paragraph 2, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965.

Education in the Hands of Sheriffs

The Croatian education system has been undergoing a process of decentralisation over a number of years. Teachers are therefore paid out of local government budgets and, as Anita Car, President of the Trade Union of Kindergarten, Elementary and High School Employees of Croatia (TUKEHSEC) explains, this gives rise to disparities between authorities, and raises issues of 'good will' and 'local bosses'.

EI: Please explain to us how the system of municipal education in Croatia works.

Let me give you the example of the pre-primary education system. The cost of the institutions is shared between the local government budget and the state. The local authority bears 20-40% of the cost, depending on its financial resources. Because of the difficult economic climate facing our country, some authorities waste no time in closing down pre-school establishments, and transfer teachers and children to private institutions. It goes without saying that no new public institutions have been built.

EI: Does that mean that pre-primary education will be privatised?

Local authorities want to offload certain expenditure. In theory, our union is not opposed to the privatisation of educational institutions, particularly if the process leads to a qualitative improvement in education, but we are worried that the harsh economic climate will prevent families from making use of private establishments.

EI: How would you describe your relations with local authorities?

Salaries are normally negotiated between the trade unions and local government representatives and salary levels may therefore vary considerably (by as much as 40%) depending on the authority's financial well-being and political priorities.

It is widely felt that some municipal leaders behave like 'sheriffs', and arbitrarily decide to terminate collective agreements or re-negotiate them to suit their purposes.

In fact, trade unions face real problems as far as collective bargaining is concerned. Local representatives are not prepared, they do not know the rules of the game, and they refuse to look upon trade unions as negotiating partners. Some even jeopardise principles that have been won, delay the opening of negotiations indefinitely or abruptly breaking off negotiations.

EI: What tactics have you put in place?

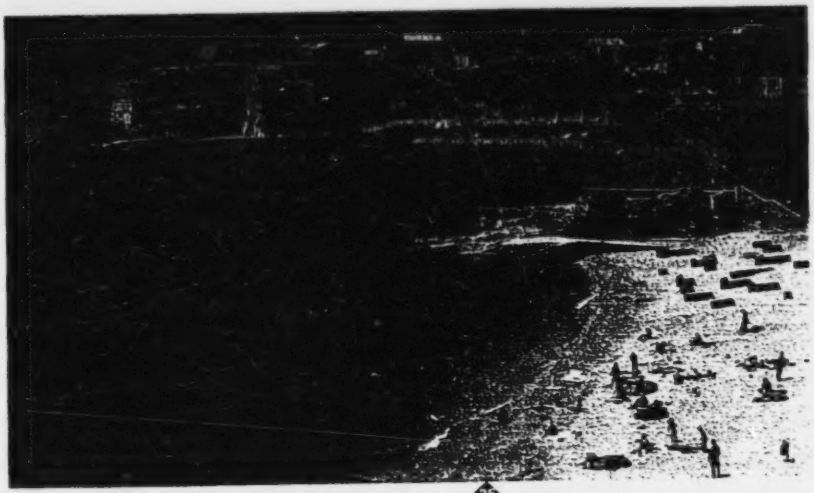
We are working on the adoption of updated standards (standards dating back to 1983 are still in force) and a national salary scale; indeed, the Education Ministry has now been working on this project for over 10 years.

With new standards, the unions could negotiate with local authorities on the basis of a national salary scale. We also aim, again at national level, to introduce a framework of standards for the profession.

We believe it is important to make trade unions credible in the eyes of society, as social partners with full rights. That will enable us to conduct collective bargaining designed to re-assess the material situation of teachers, and improve the quality of teaching from a lifelong learning perspective.

EI: Your union deals specifically with pre-primary teachers: can you tell us any more about this sector in Croatia?

Pre-school education in the Republic of Croatia forms an integral part of the education system. A third of all children in the age group concerned attend pre-school institutions during the year before they go to primary school. Attendance rates obviously vary, with some establishments unable to accept all the children, and others operating below capacity. The Ministry of Education and Sport and its regional bodies are responsible for pedagogical supervision. ◆



The sunny side of Croatia: the beaches of Dubrovnik have not been privatised yet.
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Education in Time of War

FEDERACION COLOMBIANA DE EDUCADORES

Colombian education is under attack from all sides, with education employees the victims of both the civil war that has been raging for the last 40 years and the government reform of teachers' status. Under the guise of decentralisation, the door is being opened to privatisation the education.

Following mediation at national and international level, the government and the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC – Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia) resumed the peace process in early January 2002. Hopefully, a conclusion will be reached by next April with the signing of a peace agreement. The *Federación Colombiana de Educadores* (FECODE) had been hoping for what the organisation's President, Gloria Inés Ramírez, called a 'negotiated political way-out'. Ms Ramírez has been concerned that failure by the government and the guerrillas to return to the negotiating table "would result in an escalation in the war that would affect all social organisations".

We are still a long way from genuine solutions for emerging from the conflict and entering into a form of cohabitation that is concerned about respect for human rights, the integrity of citizenship, the full exercise of all social, economic and political rights, and true, full self-determination. Discussions continue to be scared by deep political and ideological differences, drug trafficking, and prevalent use of violence from both sides.

Editor's note: article submitted on 28 January

Innocent victims

The government and the guerrillas, attempting to weaken and expose the enemy, take civilians hostages. Two recent cases have illustrated how children are becoming actors in a conflict that is gradually bleeding the Colombian people dry. Last January, the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) denounced the 'detention' of four young girls by a paramilitary group in the municipality of Santander de Quilichao. One of these young girls was raped in an attempt to make her divulge information on individuals close to the guerrillas. Shortly before that, a boy suffering from terminal cancer begged for the release of his father before the Christmas holiday: he died without seeing his wish fulfilled. His father, an army Captain, had been held by a rebel organisation.

Gloria Ramírez, president of FECODE with EI Chief Regional Co-ordinator Comberttty Rodríguez, at the Colombian trade union's General Meeting.
© FECODE

On 7 January, a student leader, Marcos Salazar Prado, was murdered in front of his daughter. A member of the Colombian Association of University Students, this engineer-to-be had received threats as far back as 15 August 2001. He and the University had asked the Ministry of the Interior for protection –but their request went unheeded.

This case is yet another addition to what is already a long list of trade union activists, journalists and political leaders who have been murdered in Colombia. According to the most recent report from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)[1], Colombia sadly holds the highest record for the number of assassinations and disappearances of trade union leaders: with 112 lives lost in 2000, Colombia accounts for 82% of all murders of trade unionists in Latin America. The ICFTU report notes that Colombia again heads the world list of violations of trade union rights. According to the *Central Unitaria de Trabajadores* (CUT) trade union centre, a trade unionist is killed every three days. The teaching profession is the among most affected by the assassinations, together with workers in the oil-producing sector, the legal profession, sellers of lottery tickets, and employees of electrical enterprises and mines.

Teachers are frequently murdered in attempts at intimidation. Each time that teachers, students and workers at the *Universidad del Atlántico* publicly protest to demand decent salaries or denounce a violation of rights, a teacher is murdered. The lives of ten teachers working in the Valle del Cauca department have been threatened by the paramilitary group *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*. Given the seriousness of the threats, the trade union for education workers in the Cauca Valley, SUTEV, has called for teaching staff to be re-assigned.

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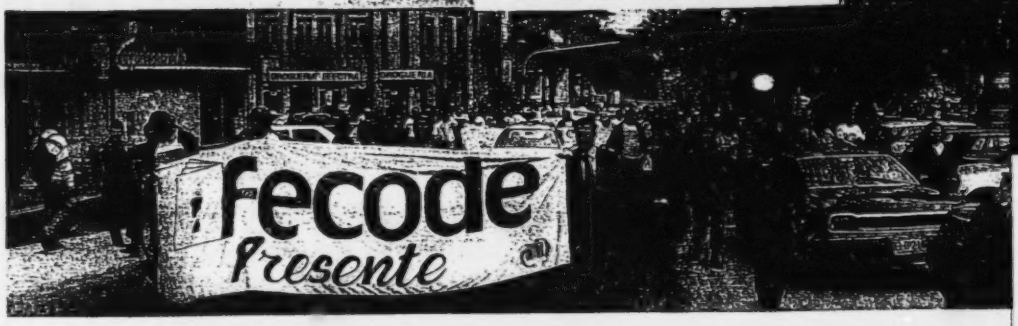
1 ICFTU Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights 2000, 2001, ICFTU, Brussels, www.icftu.org, Tel +32 2 224 0211.



Protest march by Colombian teachers in the streets of Bogotá.
© FECODE

In some cases, teaching staff are literally forced to leave the area because teachers are seen as 'guerrilla auxiliaries'. Recently, a masked man burst into a school board meeting attended by teachers and parents, and without warning murdered the Director, 49-year-old Ana Ruby Urrego Naranjo. She had never complained of threats.

Last November, an Education International mission went to Colombia to offer teachers and the FECODE trade union centre international support from the teaching community.

Decentralisation, a new word for privatisation

In December 2001, says the FECODE President, the National Congress amended the status of teachers 'in line with demands from the World Bank'. This change has made the living conditions of members of the teaching profession precarious, and has totally subjected education to the laws of the market. Funding will no longer be awarded on the basis of communities' educational needs.

It was possible to see this situation coming. For months, it was said that the government was going to attempt the state's biggest restructuring exercise since 1992. When they were forced to make public expenditure cutbacks to control the fiscal deficit, they announced that 9,000 civil servants in the central administration were sacked. The government also said that they would not fill the 30,000 vacancies nationally, departmentally or locally. Official institutions will have to trim their budgets by 7% over the next two years, and salaries will have to be adjusted as a result.

There is also evidence to suggest that schools will have to be closed. Serafín Rodríguez, the President of a teachers' association in a district where 53 establishments are likely to go, says that the union and the parents are opposed to the closures. He has no doubt that it is the government's intention to privatise.

Education policies do not provide comprehensive solutions guaranteeing quality, universal, public education. Far from it. Their aim is fragmentation by leaving local authorities to deal with problems, although everybody knows they do not have the necessary funding. FECODE and ANTHOC, an association representing the health sector, went on strike in April and May 2001 to protest against the new law that transfers control of funds and programs to municipalities. According to FECODE, the policy, which has already been approved by the Senate, aims to limit the resources that the federal government allocates to the health and education sectors. Despite fierce opposition from social organisations, Congress has approved the reform.

The far-off objective of Education For All

The report presented by Colombia to World Education Forum in Dakar focused on *'the need to combine public money and the private sector by trying to get it to collaborate in the children's sector, and channelling financial resources towards NGOs capable of providing a more efficient service'*. FECODE disagrees strongly with this analysis, and has organised a strike against a draft law that will enable NGOs to administer a certain amount of education through contracts with the state.

According to the news media, 2,035,607 Colombian children – out of a total population of 41 million inhabitants – have never set foot in a school. To give them an education would cost 2.7 billion pesos (1.2 million USD), that is to say 1.54% of the country's Gross Domestic Product. An investment of these proportions would make it possible to educate the entire 5-17-year-old population. The challenge also involves extending the minimum period of education to 11 years, from 6 years, as it is at present. Extrapolations suggest that if nothing is done, it will take another 36 years before Colombia achieves the EFA objective.

However, the government's strategy, again according to the Dakar report, contains no sign of any will on the part of the state to respond to this challenge. As the report says, *'given current restrictions in the public education offer, and until the imbalances in allocating and distributing resources are rectified, it will be necessary to continue promoting access to basic education as far as possible through excess capacity in the private sector, or even through the establishment of an alternative offer that is more flexible from the point of view of administering the service, and more capable of responding to the beneficiaries' special features.'*

The Colombian people are seeing some – or all – of their lives being taken away from them in the struggle for peace. Children are involved in the conflict. How can we explain the harsh realities besetting them? How can we justify the fact that they may be hit by bullets during this conflict? FECODE demands recognition of the right of all children to quality education and the abolition of child labour. ◆

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

Highlights and denounces the fact that since 1987 Colombian educators have been subjected to all manner of political persecution and attacks against their trade unions, and have been the victims of numerous "disappearances" and murders;

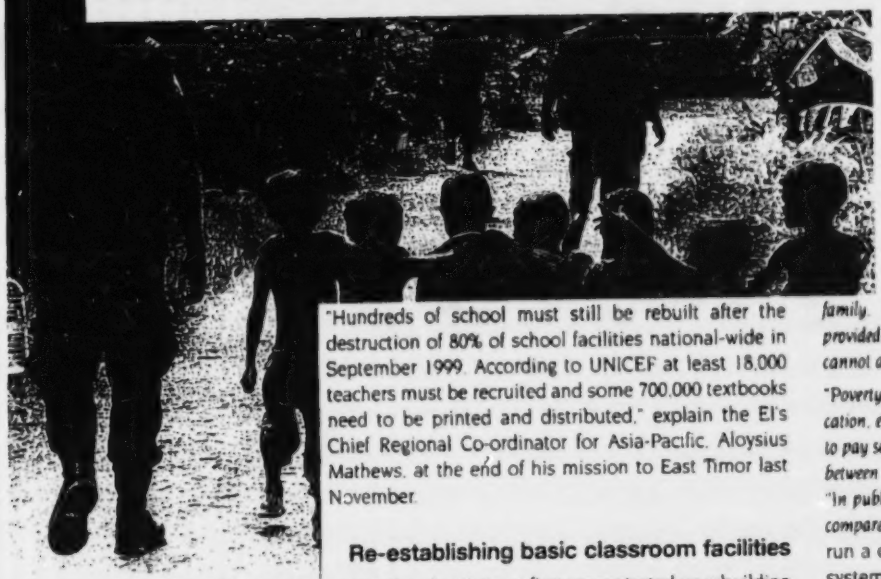
Denounces and rejects the repressive policies - aimed at quashing social protest - which the Colombian government under the leadership of the President of the Republic, Andrés Pastrana Arango, has been implementing against Colombian workers in general and teachers in particular;

Urges the Colombian government to condemn and reject the persecution and murder of Colombian educators and to take effective measures to guarantee the free exercise of the teaching profession and of trade union activity.

EI Third World Congress of Education International, July, 2001 (excerpts)

Héctor Ferlini
EI Latin America

Education Plays a Leading Role in Rebuilding War-torn Country



© Photonews

Annexed by Indonesia in 1975, the old had reclaimed its independence in a U undermine this declaration of autonom violent repression during September an Nations (UN) has lead rebuilding effort independence on 20 May 2002, but it is The teachers' union is ready to take up

"Hundreds of school must still be rebuilt after the destruction of 80% of school facilities national-wide in September 1999. According to UNICEF at least 18,000 teachers must be recruited and some 700,000 textbooks need to be printed and distributed," explain the EI's Chief Regional Co-ordinator for Asia-Pacific, Aloysius Mathews, at the end of his mission to East Timor last November.

Re-establishing basic classroom facilities

International assistance first concentrated on rebuilding school facilities in order to accommodate pupils. At the end of October 2001, 2,630 classroom·s were in working order again, underlines a study by the World Bank. The study also points out that number of restored classrooms is 25% more then projected.

United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) envisaged a nearly $17 million USD for the education sector over a one year period, at least 1/2 of which would be dedicated to primary education. Education is by far the single largest budget sector of the UN's reconstruction program- absorbing more then 25%.

"Eighty percent of all schools have no electricity, water and toilet facilities," says Aloysius Mathews. "Teachers who approached UNTAET for assistance to repair schools were told to secure funds from other sources. Teachers of a state runt school in Dili were forced to take funds from the Portuguese government to repair and reopen the school. Usually funds are provided to headmasters."

"For the academic year 2000/2001, three quarters of the pupils, that is to say 240,000 children, started school again, in less than 1,000 schools" according to EI's affiliate in East Timor, ETTU. The World Bank study confirms that "Enrolment has reached the pre-1999 level in primary education (grades 1-6) but still below that level in junior secondary education (grades 7-9) and in senior secondary education (grades 10-12)."

Poor attendance

"Steady progress has been made towards re-establishing basic primary classroom facilities," acknowledges the *Forum Nacional* ONG *Timor Lorosa'e*, an umbrella agency for East Timorese NGOs, in its newsletter dated June 2001. *"However, much remains to be done. We know that the strong enrolment figures mask a number of negative factors affecting children's learning in primary school. Limited class time is one problem: most children are only in class 2-4 hours a day. Poor attendance is another important issue. Some children stay away from school because they have to work in order to help support the family. Others stay at home when the exercise books and pencils provided by the UN Administration are used up, since their parents cannot afford to buy more."*

"Poverty continues to exclude many children and adults from education, especially in rural and remote areas. Students are required to pay school and examination fees based on an agreement reached between teachers and parents," explains Aloysius Mathews. *"In public schools, fees at primary level amount to one US dollar, compared to 10-15 dollars in private schools"*. ETTU intends to run a campaign to attract more children to the school system and to influence national policies to enhance the Education For All framework.

School principals report that parents wish to place many children of age 4 to 5 in primary school. They are forced to turn them away because the school system starts at age 6 and first grade classes are already overloaded. This shows the need to develop provision for early childhood education.

Establish a new school system in the ashes of the old

Teachers report that furniture provision remains generally poor and has a very negative impact on learning. Textbooks, selected by local education committees with guidance from UNTAET, were purchased directly from Indonesian publishers. *"They will, however, have newly designed covers and include a local preface, and any inappropriate content will be eliminated,"* said a note from the World Bank in May 2000.

The language transition in primary schools is also proving a significant barrier to learning. A major legacy of Indonesia's occupation is the divisions that have emerged in Timorese society over the question of language. Timorese of over 30 years of age are in favour of Tetum and Portuguese, while younger people prefer the adoption of Tetum, English and Bahasa Indonesian. Indeed, adoption of Portuguese as the official language could place the Timorese who were educated under the Indonesian system at a disadvantage, and cause them to feel frustrated and marginalized by the reconstruction process.

The current structure of Tetum, the *lingua franca* of both groups, makes it unsuitable as the country's official language. Tetum would probably need 10-15 years to modernise.

In August 2000, the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) Congress, adopted Portuguese as the official language and Tetum as the territory's nation-

1 www.geocities.com/etnoforum/index.htm

rtuguese colony of East Timor
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al language. In view of the shortage of teachers qualified to teach in Portuguese, it was agreed that Indonesian and Tetum may be used. The temporary solution of using more than one teaching language places an added burden on a fledgling system already undermined by material and human resources shortages.

Teacher Shortage

The teacher/pupil ratio, at 1:55, is not one that enhances quality. The World Bank's emphasis on quality when it comes to buildings and furniture – and the availability of funding – do not seem to be echoed in the area of human resources that depend on the current budget," bitterly notices the Forum Nacional ONG Timor Lorosa'e.

"In one of the high schools of Maliana district, four teachers are responsible for 800 students. In Abo primary school in Kilkae, one teacher is responsible for 120 students. There are many such examples of inappropriate student teacher ratio," notes Aloysius Mathews.

In the led-up to 1999, the Indonesian authorities reduced the number of teachers by more than 50% for financial reasons. From year 1998 to 1999, the number of secondary teachers had decreased from 6,670 to less than 3,000. Then during the violence of 1999, many more Indonesian teachers fled the country. They constituted 80% of the teachers at the secondary level.

"Currently, the majority of the teachers are Timorese, but only 10% of them are trained," explains Joao Baptista of ETTU. Teachers began volunteering in view of the urgency to get children back into school. Later on, they were paid by UNICEF and/or received food aid. Teachers at primary level now receive 123 US dollar in public schools. There are no additional benefits or allowances. Teachers have to pay a 10% income tax deducted directly from their salary. "Although teacher salaries have increased on the levels prior to September 1999, teachers indicate that the dramatic increase in the cost of living has eroded the value of their salaries," says EI's Chief Regional Co-ordinator for Asia Pacific.

Teacher training programmes

UNICEF conducted some teacher-training seminars focused on demonstrating how no-cost alternatives can be used in classrooms, and how children can be more actively involved in the education process. Australia, Brazil, Finland and Portugal were also involved in teacher training schemes for East Timor.

Many teachers express frustration about the absence of pre-service and in-service training opportunities. "*We believe that upgrading the skills of teachers cannot wait until infrastructure work is complete.*" explains ETTU General Secretary. "*It is an urgent priority in order to improve the quality of education. Teachers are particularly keen to receive training assistance with handling the language transition.*"

The recruitment of female teachers is another key issue. The overall percentage of women teachers in East Timor is low in all sectors and affirmative action should be taken to redress this imbalance. Women with many years of experience are being excluded from employment due to the selection process. In a number of subdistricts, there are no female primary school teachers. This has a negative impact on the educational opportunities open to girls at school.

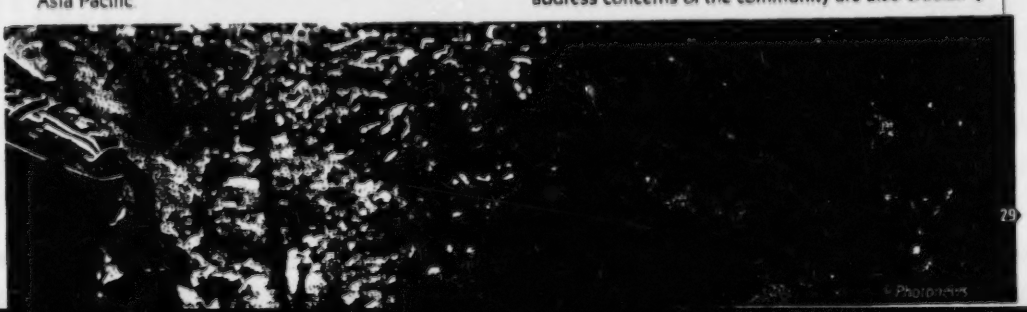
Challenges for the teachers' union

"Education should be seen as the key to East Timor's future. We should also be clear that the task of ensuring that the people of East Timor enjoy their right to education is a huge one. This is because of the history of neglect and oppression during the last century and the destruction of almost all facilities in 1999. The task will take decades to complete," said ETTU General Secretary Joao Baptista at the EI Third World Congress.

The East Timor Teachers Union (ETTU) used to be part of the Indonesian Teachers' Union (PGRI) before the independence. The new union was gained membership in EI in July 2001. At present, leaders of ETTU have little or no training in union skills. The Australian education unions (AEU and IEU) assisted in establishing the independent union and provided training programmes.

Communication between the schools and union leaders is poor. Transportation system is not in place and ETTU activists are not able to visit teachers in their schools. The affiliation ratio is very low with only 550 unionised teachers out of about 7,500. ETTU has no offices, dues are not collected and the union has no funds. Only three of the thirteen branches have established committees.

An EI co-operation development proposal includes trade union and leadership training, as well as funds to establish a union office and purchase office equipment. Workshops to help ETTU officers develop policies and address concerns of the community are also crucial. ◆



Industrialised countries give lip service to development

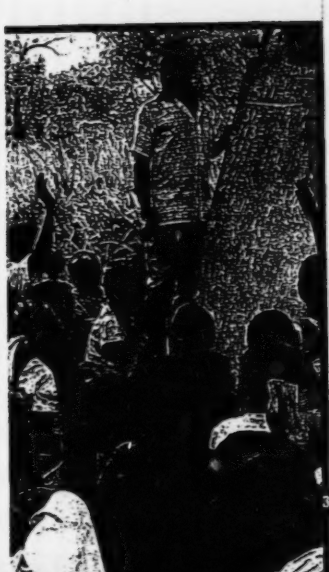
A British study prepared for the G7 shesses that if aid were targeted more selectively at poor countries with good policies, its effectiveness could be improved further.

The amount developed countries spend on development assistance, which currently averages of 0.39% percent, falls woefully short of the UN's 0.7 percent target[1]. The Monterrey Consensus[2], stressing that 'each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development', reflects a growing and worrisome international governmental philosophy of survival of the fittest.

At a time when the violence and desperation brought on by poverty, has never been so clear, official development aid (ODA) has shown a disastrous downward trend. Only a handful of countries – including Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden – spent 0.7% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on aid. Today, even these few countries are discussing plans to decrease the financial volume of their international solidarity. The centre right government elected in Denmark in November plans to slim its foreign aid budget. Japan's aid fell by 15% (USD 1.8 billion) in 2000. French official development aid fell from 0.5% of GDP to 0.32% over the last five years. The United States, with 0.1%, spends less on official aid as a percentage of national income than any of the world's 21 other most developed countries. Although the UK government has increased development aid by 22% since the Labour Party came to power, the total amounts to 0.35% of British GDP, far short of the 0.7% UN target.

A British study prepared for the G7 cites recent academic research on aid effectiveness showing that aid's impact on economic growth has increased since the Cold War. The British reckon that every $1 billion of aid given in 1997 raised 284,000 people permanently out of poverty, and that where a recipient country's policies are sound, aid worth 1% of GDP cuts poverty and infant mortality by 1%. If aid were targeted more selectively at poor countries with good policies, its effectiveness could be improved further. It is true that much foreign assistance has been wasted over the years, either as a result of corruption or poor planning. Ending the practice of tying aid to purchase of goods from the donor country would help.

Reacting to the decision of the new Danish Government to reduce funding of DANIDA (Danish International Development Assistance)[3], Grethe Roth from the Danish teachers' union DLF suggests that the right wing parties play the 'fear of foreigners' card. At the same time, these parties made a promise to voters to not increase taxes. All this would be implemented at the expense of international solidarity. In an editorial the DLF magazine notes: *'The ones who pay the bill are the children with AIDS in Malawi, the women in Zambia who suffer from domestic violence, the landless in Honduras and the center for human rights in Copenhagen'*[4].



Breakdown in Solidarity

Is all this the outcome of the victory of a society where the individual comes first and where sharing of responsibility is made of little importance? If so, then the decade of the nineties is merely a prelude of worse to come. At national level governments worldwide pursue policies which lead to the breakdown of the solidarity between citizens. Governments do so by focusing on privatisation, liberalisation, promoting individual gain.

1 The UN set on 24 October 1970 that countries should spent 0.7% of their Gross Domestic Product on Official Development Aid.
2 International Conference on Financing for Development, 18-22 March 2002, Monterrey (Mexico), http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/
3 Denmark's net disbursement of ODA in 1995 amounted to US$1.6 billion, or 0.96% of GNP. The Danish government has maintained the target of 1% since 1992
4 Folkeskolen, DLF magazine

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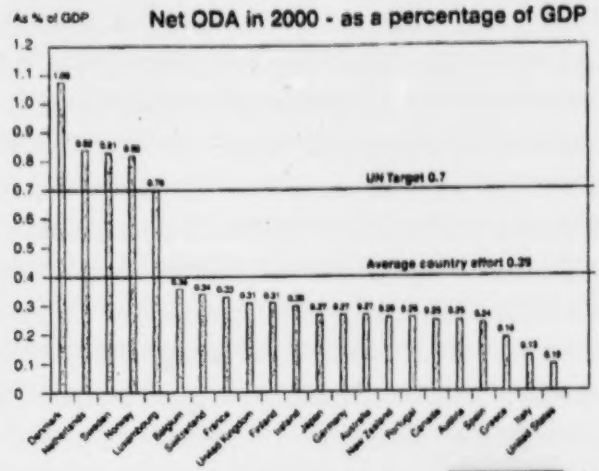
ommitments



It is a policy that discourages sharing of responsibility for society as a whole. The recently held elections in many industrialised countries are indicative of a trend away from solidarity, at national and international level.

The downfall of international solidarity is the logical consequence of the breakdown of the type of government that plays a pro-active role in securing a distribution of wealth from which all can benefit. It is this type of government that was discredited in the nineties.

The impact on the education sector is evident. Parents have to pay more and more for the education of their children. The health services are being privatised. This is the result of governments telling their citizens to consider health and education as an individual commodity rather than a shared interest from which society as a whole can benefit. The 'individual first' attitude embedded in Western society has a deep impact on feelings of solidarity for peoples on other continents.

While ODA fell, private investments increased. This fits with the philosophy of 'trade not aid'. The Bush administration emphasises trade over foreign aid as the surest route to prosperity. However, it is not trade which is to be promoted, but fair trade, giving a chance to developing countries to enter the markets in the industrialised countries and bringing an end to the sky-high subsidies to European and North American agricultural industries. At present the role of the state as instrument to ensure a fair and honest distribution of wealth for all its citizens is being ignored. But such role can never be taken up by 'the market', simply because 'the market' is not geared to equality and dealing with issues such as 'fair' and 'honest'. The market focuses on conquering and survival of the fittest. It is in this political climate that the trade union movement has to operate. Against the trend of the day. But with no other responsibility than to seek to convince the electorate to stand for solidarity at national and international solidarity.

Security in prosperity

More than 1 billion people live on less than $1 a day. More than 110 million children do not go to school. Some 7 million people die each year from preventable diseases. The UN estimates that rich countries would need to double the $50 billion they spend annually to achieve the goals that 189 countries agreed at the UN's millennium summit, which include: reducing by half the number of people suffering poverty and hunger or lacking access to drinking water; achieving universal primary schooling; drastically reducing maternal and infant mortality rates; and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Desperate poverty abroad is both a moral failure and a long-term threat to the interests of rich countries.

Putting money where their mouth is

At the G7 summit (Canada, June 2002), where the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD)[5] will be launched, the British government proposes a commitment that will double ODA. But the Bush administration takes a different line and dismisses calls from its allies for a co-ordinated doubling of foreign aid to poor countries. As a result of US lobbying, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development weakly calls on rich countries to make "concerted efforts" to increase aid. Although Secretary of State Colin Powell has spoken in favour of a substantial aid increase, the President's new budget proposal offers only a modest one. When Microsoft's Bill Gates chastised the US government for being a "*laggard*" in foreign spending earlier this month, Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill replied that poor countries have collected "*trillions of dollars in aid over the years with precious little to show for it.*"

Western governments can not complain of 'wasted money' while they continue to engage in economic activities detrimental to developing economies, such as trade distorting subsidies, abusive of anti -dumping measure, and trade liberalisation in labour intensive manufacturing.

Donors now give a clear sense of wanting to see their money having a positive effect on the lives of the people. If the money is being mismanaged, the right response is to fix aid programs rather than abandon them. ◆

Poverty is the worst form of violence

Mahatma Gandhi

Wouter Van der Schaaf
Co-ordinator Membership Services

5 NEPAD involves a range of ambitious targets relating to governance, education, investment and IT, communications and infrastructure. The plan has been endorsed by the Organisation for African Unity and has been received positively by the G8 - though whether additional funds will follow is a key question.

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A Forward-Looking Institution with Deep Roots in the Past

The International Bureau of Education (IBE), known also by its French acronym, "BIE", given that its seat is in Switzerland, was founded in 1925 as an independent body to promote education for international understanding.

Its remit was to support comparative research in education and organise the biennial International Conferences on Education bringing together the education ministers of every country in the world. In 1969 the IBE adopted a new set of statutes whereby it became integrated into UNESCO while at the same time retaining broad policymaking and operational autonomy.

The General Conference of UNESCO in 1999 decided to convene the International Conferences on Education on a less frequent basis within the framework of a new mandate.

The latest International Conference on Education, on the theme "Education for all for learning to live together: contents and learning strategies – problems and solutions", was held from 5 to 9 September 2001. Its innovative approach was reflected in the extensive use of interactive media and new information technology. The next conference is scheduled to take place in the first quarter of 2005 and will focus on issues concerning the education of young people and the need for a global response to poverty.

The IBE's new mandate consists of becoming an international centre for the development of educational contents and methods for learning to live together as well as the development of curricula with a humanist approach. The International Conference on Education, the only event of its kind to bring together education ministers from all over the world, will now be organised every four to six years.

On this new basis, the IBE has centred its action on three main programmes and a number of thematic projects.

The three main programmes of the IBE are the following:

1. Organising a resource databank and strengthening the role of the IBE as an observatory of trends;
2. Capacity-building for curriculum development; and
3. Policy dialogue, particularly with regard to the contents and methods of education for learning to live together.

One key thematic project is the creation of the Databank of Educational Resources and Strategies to promote curricula which will contribute to positive education against AIDS.

It is the aim of the IBE to increasingly become the main reference institution for ministries of education, teachers' organisations and other actors who wish to have access to documentation and opportunities for training, dialogue and exchanges in order to incorporate strategies for learning to live together in educational curricula and ensure that such strategies are implemented.

The activities of the IBE include technical co-operation with countries, non-governmental organisations and universities with a view to curriculum development; the promotion of participatory decision-making processes; the organisation of workshops and seminars; lobbying on specific issues; the development of training modules; and the organisation of study visits and other exchanges.

Recent exchange and training activities were organised in Kenya, Nigeria, Lithuania, Thailand, Uruguay and Oman. Several missions and evaluations were carried out in connection with projects in Bolivia and Peru. Three curriculum development projects with very different characteristics have been implemented (or are still under way) with the help of the IBE in Campana (Buenos Aires Province), India and Kosovo.

The IBE databases and publications are available to educators, government officials and other stakeholders in education at the IBE web site: www.ibe.unesco.org.

All interested organisations and individuals are invited to put forward suggestions on the web site. ◆

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Cecilia Braslavsky
Director

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EI had produced a pedagogical kit as part of its contribution to the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000). EI developed this kit to help member organisations involve teachers and students in actively promoting education for peace, human rights and international understanding. The kit is designed to serve as a teaching resource for peace education. It explains concepts such as "bullying" and "violence", spells out the Rights and Conventions in plain language, and references web-sites and selected readings.

EI has published its policy resolutions. The publication opens with the EI Declaration on Professional Ethics that was adopted at the 2001 World Congress in Jomtien, Thailand. The other resolutions included in the 136-page publication were adopted at one of the three World Congresses held so far. The 60+ resolutions are organised by topic: Education and Employment; Human and Trade Union Rights; Development Co-operation; and Globalisation.

UNESCO, with the support of EI, has released an interactive CD-ROM on "Educating for Citizenship", meant to help pre-primary and primary school teachers, as well as the educational community as a whole, in tackling this theme with students. This pedagogical tool contains a wide range of materials that can be used in teaching a variety of subjects. Because of its potential for fun in the classroom or in workshops, it will enable teachers to initiate activities that promote a participatory approach to learning that encourages communication, the building of knowledge-and-values, but also solidarity among students.

This multimedial CD-ROM can be obtained from the Documentation and Information Service of the Education Section of UNESCO.
E-mail: coeducation@unesco.org

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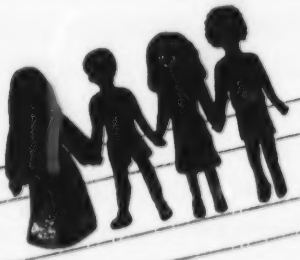
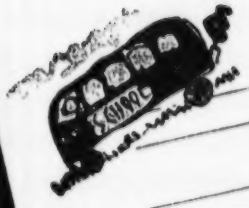
International Drawing Competition





Hey Kids!

Help us remind people that every child in the world deserves to go to school. If you are between **6-12** years old, show the world how important learning is to YOU by drawing us a picture of what you want to be when you grow up. You can use paint, crayons, cutout pictures... anything you want, but it cannot be more than 2x the size of this page. The best drawings will be part of an art exhibition to show people around the world how bright the future is with Education For All.

Deadline: April 28

Global Action Week:
22-28 April 2002

Ask your teacher for more details

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